The COMMUNIST

MARCH

SURPLUS DUPLICATE

THE GREAT AUTOMOBILE STRIKE

BY WILLIAM WEINSTONE

Lessons of the Maritime Strikes	ROY HUDSON
The Rubber Front in Akron	JAMES KELLER
Party Mobilization in Ohio	JOHN WILLIAMSON
Trial of Trotskyite Agents of Fascism	I. AMTER
Trotskyism in the United States	C. A. HATHAWAY
Struggle Against Criminal Syndicalist Laws	ANNA DAMON

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The COMMUNIST

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REVIEW OF THE MONTH

General Motors Can Be Licked • Labor Wins Important Victory • Contrasts With Green's Truce • Industrial Unionism and the New Strategy • Common Action for Auto, Steel and Coal • Sit-Down Strikes as a New Weapon • Valuable Experiences of General Motors Struggle • Monopolies Prepare Civil Warfare • Protecting Jobs of Striking Workers • Labor Views Roosevelt Critically • From Common Feelings to Political Alliance With Middle Classes • Faster Political Tempo • Victory of Maritime Workers • Stamp Out Labor Spying • A Significant Manifesto on Foreign Policy • Proposals Need Amendments • Roosevelt's Judicial Proposals and Certain Liberal Opposition • Struggle Against Trotskyism Is Affair of Progressive Mankind • Young Communist League Prepares Convention.

LABOR has won a most important position in the struggle against General Motors and the economic royalists. It has won a position from which it will now be possible to wage the battle for collective bargaining and better conditions in the automotive industry on a wider front and with infinitely greater effectiveness.

Labor has taken a great step forward. It has scored a victory on one of the most decisive sectors of the class struggle front. It has scored a victory for all genuinely democratic and anti-fascist forces in the country.

At the beginning of the strike, General Motors refused to negotiate with the union altogether. Sloan's formula was: if the workers have grievances, let them speak to the plant managers. On this issue, General Motors was beaten completely. Negotiations are carried on by the *union*, not with plant managers but with the national officials of the corporation.

After General Motors double-crossed the "Lansing agreement", and the union thereupon refused to evacuate the plants, Sloan's formula was: no negotiations until the sit-down strikers leave the plants. Morgan, du Pont and the entire capitalist press raised the issue of the "sacredness of property" and declared for no compromise on this issue. On this, too, General Motors had to back down completely. They had to draw in their tails and start negotiation *while the sit-downers held the plants.*

General Motors had to back down also on another of its fundamental demands. It said it will *under no circumstances* grant the right of "exclusive bargaining" to the Auto Workers' Union; it will not "surrended" its workers to Lewis' "bondage". From

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this position General Motors had to retreat a considerable distance. It was forced to recognize in effect the Auto Workers' Union as the exclusive bargaining agency in the twenty plants on strike. It was forced to assume this obligation for a period of six months in its letter to Governor Murphy, which letter is part and parcel of the agreement.

Finally, General Motors "agreed to consent" to the dismissal of the injunction proceedings against the sit-downers and the union officials as well as of the contempt proceedings instituted by the corporation.

Does this agreement meet all the demands of the workers for union recognition in General Motors? Of course not. The union is fighting for its recognition as the only genuine bargaining agency of the workers in all the plants of General Motors. By the agreement of February 11, the union has won such exclusive recognition for six months in those twenty plants that were actually on strike, and the right to bargain collectively in the name of its members in all other General Motors plants. The fight for collective bargaining in General Motors is therefore not finished. The workers and the union fully understand this. But they also realize that, through the glorious 44-day strike, they have advanced a great step forward toward the realization of full union recognition; that they have won highly advantageous positions for continuing the fight for the complete establishment of the union and for the other economic demands of the workers.

William Green shouts "Defeat". Yes, it was a defeat for Green as well as for General Motors. Green and Frey have done all they could to help General Motors defeat the strikers. Together with the "Flint Alliance", a vigilante creature of General Motors, William Green and John P. Frey concentrated their fire upon the demand of the Auto Workers' Union for exclusive bargaining rights, branding the strike as an "outlaw", and indirectly encouraging violence against the strikers. But Green and Frey have failed. They were licked together with their masters —General Motors.

The auto workers will undoubtedly compare the victory they achieved in this strike, which resulted in the agreement of February 11, with the terrible defeat imposed upon them by Green in the infamous "truce" of 1934. As a result of the Green truce, the young auto workers' union was nearly wiped out while the company unions were given a new lease of life and a most powerful impetus for growth. A good deal of the difficulties confronted by the present strike, from the company unions and the "Flint Alliance", was due in large measure to the consequences of Green's truce in 1934.

In contrast to the Green truce, the present strike and the agreement of February 11 have delivered a fatal blow at company unionism in the auto industry and have established the Auto Workers' Union in a most advantageous position—the first time in the history of the industry—for continuing the fight for the full realization for its rights and the other demands of the workers.

* * *

THE FIGHT in General Motors continues—this goes without saying. It continues in the negotiations begun

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on February 16 between the union and General Motors on the demand of the workers in the matter of hours, wages, speed-up, seniority rights, etc. It continues also, and above all, outside of the conference room—*in the intensive building and strengthening of the union.* Now that the workers know that General Motors can be licked, that they need have no fear of joining the union and fighting for their rights—now is the advantageous time to bring all workers into the union and to defeat completely all efforts of General Motors to impose upon its employees company unions.

It will be childish, and worse, to assume that General Motors has given up the fight. The workers must expect treachery and double-crosses similar to that following the Lansing agreement. The dastardly attack upon the celebrating workers in Anderson, Indiana, on February 13, is a sinister indication of what can be expected from General Motors and its servants. Even to make General Motors live up to the agreement of February 11 will require constant vigilance on the part of the workers and their union, instant readiness to restore the battle lines and to fight in the spirit of the famous telegram of the Flint sit-downers to Governor Murphy.

But the job is bigger than that. The job is to build the union in all General Motors plants, to bring all workers into it, to make it a democratic and effective organ for the betterment of the conditions of all workers. The agreement of February 11 constitutes a victory for the workers precisely because the conditions won enable the union to proceed now much more rapidly and effectively than heretofore in building itself up as the only recognized bargaining agency of all General Motors plants and of the entire industry.

A basic element for the consolidation of the first victory and for its extension is the maintenance and building up of the existing *fighting morale of the workers.* The workers justly feel that they have scored a victory over the most powerful and labor-hating monopolists of the country—the Morgan-du Pont gang. The sit-downers have not been evicted. They held the plants until their union agreed to evacuate. They have established their union in a most advantageous position for continuing the fight. They have compelled President Roosevelt and Governor Murphy to protect in a certain measure the rights of the workers. They have forced the Flint city authorities, servants of General Motors, to give up some of their violent plans. They have scotched in part the maneuvers of the "Flint Alliance" as well as of Green and Frey. *They have proven a power to be reckoned with.*

This spirit and consciousness have to be maintained and further cultivated. It is this spirit and understanding that will help make the victory final and secure, that will carry labor forward in all industries to greater achievements for the progress and democracy of the American people.

* * *

Most immediately concerned with the auto victory and with the further successful development of the fight there are the coal miners and the steel workers. The miners' agreement expires on April 1. The Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (S.W.O.C.) is preparing to present demands to the

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companies at the same time. It is clear, on the face of this situation, that the interests of the workers in all these three industries (auto, coal and steel) are interwoven most closely, and that intimate collaboration of the three unions is called for imperatively.

It is well known that the workers in General Motors are now fighting not only the masters of this automotive corporation but also the masters of steel as well as the ultimate masters of the coal industry. The financial interests of the Morgan-du Pont gang directly control General Motors and the United States Steel Corporation. They also control directly the production of coke (the captive mines) and are able to exert terrific pressure upon the rest of the coal-mining industry. This fact alone would be sufficient to call for a *joint strategy* by the unions of these three industries.

But there is also an immediate *time element* which demands the same thing. The auto workers, having made an important victorious advance in General Motors, are now proceeding to the next stage of active struggle. At the same time, the coal miners and steel workers are engaged in active preparations for struggle. It is, therefore, obvious that a common strategy and the most intimate collaboration of the auto, coal and steel workers would tremendously enhance the power of all of them. It would give them the most favorable chances for victory and further advancement.

This is what the Morgan-du Pont gang, and the financial oligarchy as a whole, fear most at the present time. They fear the "new stategy and tactics" of labor, because this can and does produce results for the workers. The *New York Herald Tribune* bewails "the extraordinary departure in labor strategy introduced by Mr. John L. Lewis with his highly centralized command". (January 22.) It casts nostalgic glances at the "autonomous" craft unions which monopoly capital finds so easy to keep in check. It cries out in horror at the fact that the workers now—

> ". . . march and countermarch as instructed from Washington, and hence 'in place of strikes by single unions in single occupations, plants and industries, there is here a threat of simultaneous engagements in several industries or throughout an industrial area'." (The quotation is from Mr. Wolman's article on the automobile strike in *The Independent Journal of Columbia University.)* (Ibid.)

The reader will recall that Wolman, the author of the article quoted by the *Herald Tribune,* is the same gentleman who designed the treacherous "truce" in auto and put over with the help of William Green in 1934.

The New York Times, loyal spokesman of the rapacious moguls of finance and corporate industry, is also horror-sticken at "the new strategy adopted by Mr. John L. Lewis and his organizations". And continues:

> "They order a strike not against all automobile manufacturers but solely against one big company. The aim is to cripple it not only directly but by subjecting it to the pressure of competition of rival companies." (January 27.)

These outcries of the monopolists show unmistakably *that industrial unionism* which alone enables the workers to poll together their resources, to adopt a common strategy and tactics, to utilize effectively the rivalries of competing and antagonistic groups of capitalists and thus secure for labor new advantages for progress

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and betterment—that this industrial unionism hurts the economic royalists and drives fear into their corrupt hearts. This fact alone would be conclusive proof that the new strategy is good for labor. It is also good for the American people generally because it weakens the monopolies and gives the people a chance to advance their interests.

The monopolies are thus already firing away at the common strategy of the workers in auto, steel and coal which the moguls of finance anticipate and fear. All the more reason for the unions in these industries to shape their course of action in the current months precisely upon a common strategy for the three industries.

* * *

SIT-DOWN strikes have come to be an important weapon in the hands of the workers in the struggle for better conditions. The course of the fight in General Motors was probably decisive in making it so.

Like every new weapon in the class struggle it presents also new problems. These have to be studied from the experience of the mass struggles and a proper solution found for them. The problems are numerous: technical, organizational and political.

A correct approach to these problems would require from the very outset that the sit-down strike of key workers in key plants be considered as an *additional* weapon in the hands of the workers to organize and struggle *as a mass* for their demands. It won't do to look upon the sit-down strike as something that makes no longer necessary the organization and strike action of all workers, in all plants, of a given industry or part of it. To look upon it this way would mean to isolate the advanced and militant workers—the sit-downers—from their fellows, to enable the employers to provoke conflicts between strikers and non-strikers, between union men and non-union men.

Considering for the present only one type of sit-down strike, the one practiced in General Motors, and which can be defined as striking key plants by the sit-down method, it can already be said on the basis of experience that it has proven an extremely powerful weapon of struggle. Experience has proven that the power and effectiveness of this weapon lies not in its ability to supplant or substitute for the policies of mass organization and mass strike. Striking key plants by the sit-down or stay-in methods cannot be a substitute for mass organization and mass action. But due to the special characteristics of the present economic and political situation in the country, which gave rise to the spread of the sit-down strike, this method of struggle would seem to have proven already at least three positive features.

1. It served to arouse the masses of unorganized workers and to hasten and facilitate their organization into the union for mass strike action. In other words, it served as a powerful organizing weapon.

2. By the method of staying in, the workers are developing a potent means of preventing strike-breaking *in addition* to the method of mass picketing outside the plants. A combination of the two has proven a tremendous power.

3. The stay-in strike has raised a big political issue, the struggle for which can have far-reaching favorable conse-

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quences for the further advancement of labor and its allies. It is the right of the striking worker to his job.

The experience of the struggle should be studied with the greatest care, in all details, in order to arrive at a final judgment on this very important question. It will no doubt be found that the wide emergence of the sit-down strike is accompanied here and there also by some negative developments. For example, a tendency perhaps to look upon this powerful weapon of key strikes by the stay-in method as a substitute for organizing and bringing into action, on a democratic basis, all workers in the plant or industry. Experience has, we think, already shown that to treat it as a substitute for mass organization and action is to nullify in large measures the power and effectiveness of the stay-in strike. The negative features will, of course, have to be eliminated and thus labor will have acquired an additional and highly potent weapon in the struggle for its betterment and advancement. This acquisition may prove one of the major gains resulting from the General Motors strike.

* * *

CAPITAL too is studying the strike and drawing conclusions. It is drawing conclusions of a political, technical and organizational character. Very revealing is an item in *The New York Times* (February 7), by Russell B. Porter, reporting the strike from Flint. The economic royalists have in mind, of course, the forthcoming struggles in steel and coal.

"In general, says Porter, "industry believes it must prepare itself with a more effective method of internal plant protection than General Motors has had." It is worthwhile noting some of these "preparations". Says Porter:

"One large industrial company is said to have an espionage department under which a workman can never know whether the man working alongside him is spying upon him."

No doubt, a bit exaggerated and with a purpose. But the line of thought of the economic royalists is significant. La Follette's Civil Liberties Committee should have a deeper look into that. There are other plans afoot, too.

"Another plan which has been discussed is to rebuild manufacturing plants like fortresses or penitentiaries, with walls, pill-boxes, guard-houses, sentries, impregnable gates, remote control of power, light and water facilities, so that heat, light and water could be shut off in the section of the plant affected, and such control over entrances and exits that food supplies could be cut off and sit-downers starved out."

Plants transformed into fortresses and penitentiaries. . . . They are a good deal like it already in the basic industries. The idea seems to be to go much further in that direction. And further, as related by Porter:

"It has been suggested that company police forces be strengthened, specially trained in defensive methods against the sit-down and specially equipped with effective but non-lethal weapons, such as tear gas guns. They would be expected to see that if a sit-down did occur, it would not be allowed to become a stay-in or finally an 'occupational' strike, with the men in complete control of the plant."

Labor must take note of these "plans". More than before the workers and all progressive forces must press for thorough Congressional investigation of these civil war preparations of the economic royalists. The Farmer-Labor democracy of this country must

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make this one of its major battles. *Disarm the moguls of corporate industry,* as demanded by John L. Lewis. Demand the immediate passage of legislation that would outlaw and disband the private bands of the companies, that would clean out their munitions and dismantle their arsenals and fortresses, that would punish as conspiracy all these and similar preparations by the companies—steel, auto, coal, and others—to wage civil war against the workers and against the American people generally.

Though balked in its injunction action to dislodge the stay-in strikers, and forced to consent to dismiss the whole court action, General Motors and the financial interests behind it have not given up the fight against stay-in strikes. They were forced to retreat; but they will come back again, and with greater force, if labor and its allies do not proceed at once to consolidate the positions already won. *One of these positions is the right of the workers to the stay-in strike.*

The striking workers had a sound and correct position on the question. A *New York Times* correspondent reports:

> "Of the legal and moral questions involved in taking possession of other people's property, the spokesman at Fisher Plant No. 2, said: 'All that is up to the union and the lawyers. We're not up on those things. *We're just here protecting our jobs.* We don't aim to keep the plants or try to run them, but we want to see that nobody takes our jobs. The reason this strike was called was that the company was firing men because they joined the union.'" (February 1.)

The issue is stated clearly. Striking stay-in workers have a right to protect their jobs. This right the workers have established in large measure by their successes thus far in the struggle with General Motors. It is necessary to consolidate this very important gain. And one of the things called for in the historic fight to consolidate the right of the striking workers to protect their jobs is to win for this struggle the support of the middle classes and of the toiling farmers.

The economic royalists must have been bitterly disappointed at the failure of the middle classes to respond to the incitement of the capitalist press "to rise in anger" against the "unlawful seizure of private property". Public opinion of the middle classes was clearly not with General Motors on this issue. And apparently for two main reasons:

1. The bulk of the middle classes have little sympathy for the monopolies and for the Morgan-du Pont gang —the rapacious exploiters of all toilers, including the middle class small stockholders of General Motors.

2. The bulk of the middle classes feared bloodshed and wanted a peaceful solution of the struggle.

Labor shared both of these sentiments and thus there existed in fact an alliance of feeling and sentiment between labor and the bulk of the middle classes on this issue.

This, too, labor has to consolidate. By itself this alliance of *sentiments* is not solid enough a foundation for joint action against the economic royalists; it is not strong enough to withstand successfully future and more desperate attacks upon labor and its allies by the monopolists and their servants. For these attacks we must be prepared. Hence labor must proceed more determinedly to solidify its contacts—*politi-*

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cal contacts and relations—with the toiling farmers and the middle classes of the cities. And this means, first of all, *more energetic independent political action and organization by labor.*

The C.I.O., the A. F. of L., Labor's Non-Partisan League, the Farmer-Labor progressive movements of the Northwest, the truly progressive groupings in the Democratic Party as well as those who are nominally still in the Republican Party—all Farmer-Labor-democratic forces of the country must make these fundamental political conclusions from the General Motors fight and the general situation.

Labor's political initiative is called for once more. The situation is becoming ripe for several advances on this field. Specifically, labor's growing political consciousness favors and makes possible such a course. It is perfectly safe to assume that, as a result of the General Motors fight and of certain developments in the 75th Congress, labor and the toilers generally are learning certain political as well as industrial lessons.

At the basis of these lessons is the mass feeling, which one cannot escape, that labor and its allies are proving to be a power to be reckoned with by "friend" as well as enemy. And why? Because the masses fight, they organize, they begin to rely largely on their own independent strength. And from this fact practical conclusions will be drawn by ever larger numbers of workers. Industrial unionism is the thing, more intensive struggle for the unity of the American trade union movement, closer political collaboration with the city middle classes and toiling farmers, independent political action to clean out the servants of the companies from control of the city governments in the one-industry towns (Flint is the example and experience), more pressure upon Congress, the state legislatures and the Roosevelt administration for the passage of measures needed by labor.

There is no doubt that there is taking place now a certain *change* in the attitude of the masses to the Roosevelt administration, due to certain experiences in the General Motors fight, and in others. The masses could not miss in the General Motors' fight two outstanding facts in the relation of the government to the struggle. First, that Roosevelt and also Murphy were not with the striking workers wholeheartedly, that they both felt very uncomfortable in the face of the strike and were also very reluctant to give the slightest indication of approval of the workers' position. A capitalist statesman may be a liberal, and thus differ from a reactionary, but he is a *capitalist* statesman, first and last. The masses feel it today; we must help them to understand it. Second, that despite Roosevelt's capitalist feelings in the matter (and also Murphy's), *the workers and their allies have proven strong enough to compel Roosevelt and Murphy to come across with a certain measure of protection of the rights of the striking workers.*

This marks the beginning of a change. Uncritical belief in Roosevelt among wider masses is rapidly disappearing. It is supplanted by a highly critical attitude, one that could be expressed as follows: "Some say that we must retain friendly relations with Roosevelt and such people as Murphy and Earle. Yes; but that should mean only that we have to play politics with

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these people, the same as they play politics with us. That means: in order to gain advantages from such 'friendships', we have to be strong and ready to fight; we have to have our industrial unions and make more independent use of our political power". These are the conclusions that large masses seem now ready to make.

The workers will also be ready to say in a more mature manner: "Yes, we want President Roosevelt, Governors Murphy and Earle, and similar people in power to help us against the economic royalists; we expect such help and will demand it. And then, something new will be added: the amount of help to be gotten from this source will depend upon the independent organization and struggle of the masses, on the economic and political fields, and upon their readiness to fight in the spirit of the famous telegram of the sit-downers to Governor Murphy.

The Communists knew, of course, these truths all the while and were propagating them among the workers. Now the wide masses, due to their own experiences and to our work, are beginning to make these truths their own. The progressive leadership of labor must draw from this fact one general (and many specific) conclusion: *a faster tempo in the struggle for independent political action.*

* * *

THE VICTORY of the West Coast maritime strikers, helped so effectively by the strike on the East Coast and Gulf ports, enters in the present situation as a significant milestone in labor's march forward. It was a long and difficult fight forced upon the workers by the reactionary shipowners. But militancy, solidarity, policies of industrial unionism (a maritime federation), and fine working class leadership such as exemplified by Harry Bridges, brought victory to the workers. They won their demands in all essential respects.

It is clear that the consequences of this victory will strengthen the labor movement, not alone on the Pacific but all over the country. Most immediately and directly, this victory points the way to the maritime workers of the East and Gulf ports as to what has to be done to secure similar victories. A maritime federation—industrial unionism—and a militant progressive leadership. All power to the fight of the rank and file to achieve these ends.

Incidentally, the exposure of the treacherous machinations of the Trotskyites on the West as well as East coasts, and the determination of the workers to drive these fascist agents out of the labor movement, are no minor gain resulting from the maritime fight.

* * *

A MENACE to everything that is progressive in the country—this is what has to be said about the time-honored institution of labor-spying. The recent disclosures of the La Follette Committee should produce a demand from one end of the country to the other for the immediate stamping out of this menace.

The so-called National Metal Trades Association has been exposed as a criminal organization; and a very dangerous one just because of its apparent respectability and tremendous resources. Also because of its underground connections with the army and navy intelligence services. The investigation of these connections should be

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pressed with all vigor and to the very end. Also this angle should be gone into by the La Follette Committee —the connections of John P. Frey —head of the Metal Trades Department of the American Federation of Labor—with the labor-spying National Metal Trades Association? We are moved to bring this up by the report current in Washington that "among labor lobbyists here—both A. F. of L. and C.I.O.—he [Frey] is commonly referred to as the liaison officer between the American Federation of Labor and the Army Intelligence" (Paul W. Ward, *The Nation,* February 13).

On this report, Mr. Ward comments:

"It may also explain why the La Follette Committee—in exposing the National Metal Trades Association as a far-flung espionage agency engaged, with the aid of some of Frey's subordinates, in sabotaging the very unions Frey is supposed to lead—was unable to obtain any helpful data from Frey but was offered by him, instead, a mass of alleged evidence showing Communist 'infiltration' of the trade unions." *(Ibid.)*

In its report to the Senate (February 8) the La Follette Committee said that it had discovered—

". . . a colossal daily drive in every part of the country to frustrate enunciated labor policy and neutralize American labor laws."

We quote the *Herald Tribune* report of February 9:

"The Committee's report said General Motors and its subsidiaries had paid Pinkerton $167,586 in 1935, and charged that the detective agency had 'spent $240,000 of employers' money for corrupting men to sell out their fellow workers' during the first seven months of 1936."

The Senate Committee, after saying that "espionage has become the habit of American management", makes the following eye-opening conclusion and recommendation:

"Until it is stamped out, the rights of labor to organize, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, will be meaningless phrases. . . ."

Stamp out labor spying—is a central demand of labor and all progressives. What follows from the provisional report of the La Follettee comittee is immediate congressional legislation to stamp out this menace to the life and liberties of the American people.

* * *

THE Manifesto published and signed by thirty members of the House of Representatives, including Farmer-Laborites as well as progressives in the two old parties, is an important declaration on foreign policy by the United States. It is significant both for what it says and proposes and also as showing a praiseworthy tendency on the part of the progressives to assume initiative and to formulate an independent line. In the long run, the latter may prove even more important than the former.

From their manifesto it is seen that the Farmer-Labor progressives now realize clearly that:

". . . if an embargo is enforced against the Spanish government, but not against other nations shipping to the Spanish rebels, the United States is placed in the position of actually or constructively acting as co-belligerents with the forces attempting to overthrow the Spanish government."

The conclusion from this should have been a proposal to lift the embargo from the Spanish government and to impose an embargo upon shipments going directly and indirectly

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(through Germany, Italy, Portugal) to the fascist rebels. Instead the Manifesto urges an embargo all around. This is bad. Especially because it is based upon a so-called stronger "neutrality" policy.

The "strength" of the policy that the Manifesto advocates is supposed to lie in the *mandatory* character of the proposed neutrality legislation and its applicability *to all* belligerents, regardless of who is the aggressor. But this attitude of "regardless" is precisely the thing that makes neutrality unneutral in the present world situation — a situation containing certain powers, the fascist powers, definitely known as aggressors. Embargoes upon "all" belligerents mean today encouragement and assistance to the war-provoking and war-making fascists and militarists of Japan, Germany and Italy. The Farmer-Labor-progressives must face squarely this fact.

The mandatory features of the legislation proposed by the Manifesto could be accepted *in preference* to the Pittman-McReynolds discretionary measures favored by the administration. That is, it could be accepted on this condition: that a belligerent should be more clearly defined and qualified. Thus, while differing with the Manifesto on the principles that should underlie a peace policy for the United States, we could support the proposals for mandatory legislation contained therein *with one important amendment.*

That amendment could be formulated along the following lines: legislation that would make it mandatory upon the government of the United States to embargo shipments of arms, munitions, other materials needed for war, loans and any assistance whatever, to belligerents waging war in violation of the Kellogg Pact and other recognized principles in international law, waging such war either by open declaration of hostilities or by engineering and supporting civil wars in other countries or both.

This is by far not all that is needed for a genuine peace program, which alone can keep America out of war. But it goes a certain way in that direction. With such an amendment, we could, therefore, support the proposals contained in the Manifesto.

Furthermore, it is necessary to insist that such measures as the nationalization of the munitions industry, prohibition of private trading in arms and munitions and opposition to the industrial mobilization plan of the War Department—that these measures be *part and parcel* of any foreign policy legislation to be adopted by the 75th Congress. It is therefore regrettable that the Manifesto, while agreeing to the need of some such measures "in the long run", does not make these measures an integral part of its immediate legislative proposals but leaves it for some future date.

This, too, has to be amended.

Incidentally, Congress ought to inquire into the conspiracy of the steel patrioteers who refuse to bid on steel contracts for the navy unless the government agrees to suspend the operation of the Walsh-Healey law.

* * *

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S proposals for judicial reform have created, according to Walter Lippmann, "a constitutional crisis", "the greatest crisis in seventy years". It would be more cor-

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rect to say that the reactionaries, whose dirty deeds Lippmann is always ready to beautify and embellish, would like to create a constitutional crisis, or any other crisis, in order to save their darling and hope—the Supreme Court —from being called to account by the people.

It is high time that this irresponsible, dictatorial and anti-democratic body —the Nine Old Men—be called to account and shorn of the power which they usurped in clear violation of the Constitution. The trouble is that the President is not at all ready and determined to lead Congress to reassert its Constitutional powers as against the usurpations of the Court. If he were, he would at once propose that Congress resort to the simple, direct *and* constitutional way of achieving this objective—namely, by Congressional decision. This would at once put the Court in its right place and restore to Congress the opportunity to legislate for the welfare of the people of the United States.

This direct road — Congressional action that will take away from the Court its usurped power—is and remains the best and most effective way. Such action could be reinforced with an appropriate constitutional amendment later on. For this the labor and progressive forces should continue to fight.

A curious element in the situation is the unwillingness of some who call themselves progressive and liberal to support the Court proposals of the President. Why? That these fall short of what is needed is quite obvious. But it is equally obvious that the realization of the President's proposals would create a Court of such composition as would be more in accord with the policies of the administration than is the present Court. And this certainly cannot be worse than what we have today. Chances are it may be better.

It may be argued that the adoption of the President's proposals might tend to create a substitute for more thorough and permanent change, and thus delay for a long time such desirable change. Such a danger really exists. But the way to guard against such a danger is certainly not to join with the reactionaries and fascists to defeat the President's proposals. To do so would mean playing the game of the Morgans, du Ponts, Hoovers and Hearsts.

Admittedly the situation is complicated but this is no excuse for wrong decisions. As indicated by the Communist Party, the correct course for labor and all progressives is to defeat the new offensive of reaction, which is trying to stage a come-back on this issue; *and this means to help carry into law the President's proposals.* After this has been accomplished, the progressive and labor forces would then have to exert all their influence to see to it that *the proper judges are appointed.*

This is one phase of the task. The next, and perhaps more important phase in the long run, is to utilize the adoption of the President's proposals *as an opening wedge* to press forward with Congressional action to curb the usurped power of the Supreme Court. In fact, both things should be attempted simultaneously.

In other words, while supporting the President's proposals, the progressive and labor forces ought to *concentrate* on securing Congressional action for the curbing of the Supreme Court's

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power, and to arouse and organize the masses to fight and press for such action. If carried out along these lines, the fight against the Supreme Court can become an important milestone in the further crystallization and development of the Farmer-Labor-progressive movements of this country, which alone can become a bulwark against reaction and safe defender of democracy.

With such an approach and policy, the forthcoming national conference on the Supreme Court, at which Senator Norris is to preside, can become a valuable instrument in the fight for the realization of the people's mandate in the elections.

* * *

TROTSKYISM, the ally of fascism, is a menace to all progressive mankind—this truth is becoming clear to ever larger circles of people to whom the fight for peace and democracy is a serious and vital affair. If the Moscow trials had done nothing else but convincingly expose this truth before the world, they will stand out as one of the greatest contributions to the fight against fascism and war.

Yet we still find certain progressive elements who, though deeply impressed with the exposures of Trotskyism at the trials, would wish to close their eyes to the fact that the fight against Trotskyism is not a Russian affair alone but is the affair of all progressive people everywhere. Also in the United States. Or, we should say rather, especially in the United States, since capitalist reaction and fascism in this country have adopted Trotsky as their "own" (his proximity to this country makes it easier for them to do so), and Trotskyism has become here also part of the reactionary offensive against the American people. No informed person, familiar with the reactionary American press, not alone Hearst's, could fail to see that fact since Trotsky arrived in Mexico.

Of course, one is free to close one's eyes to facts, but the facts remain none the less. And those who are willing to fight reaction *in America* in deeds and not only in words cannot for long keep their eyes closed to this fact.

Speaking of liberals and progressives in the United States who "are rushing with apparent eagerness into a hot controversy . . . about the recent treason trials in Moscow", the *New Republic* says editorially:

> "By lining up either on the side of Stalin or that of Trotsky, they are giving their convictions about Russian politics predominance over the needs for unity in supporting immediately desirable measures in this country, measures that have no relation whatever to the guilt or innocence of the men recently condemned and sentenced in the Soviet Union." (February 17.)

See how much more politically discerning, realistic and practical the reactionaries and fascists are when compared with some of our liberal and progressive friends. The fight against Trotskyism is "Russian politics", says the *New Republic;* but the American reactionaries work on the theory that Trotskyism is American politics and from this they proceed to work with Trotsky and Trotskyism not only against the Soviet Union but against all progressive forces in this country.

The *New Republic* makes an altogether unwarranted assumption when it says that the fight for progress in the United States has "no relation to the

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guilt or innocence" of the Trotskyites. Have the editors thought this statement through, or did it just slip out from under their pen by itself?

Certainly, the struggle to keep America out of war is something in which American liberals and progressives are or should be very much interested, and not only platonically. Yet who can deny successfully that this struggle for peace in America is related in the closest way to the guilt of the Trotskyites proven at the trials? They were proven guilty of conspiring with Japanese and German fascism *to hasten war* and to help fascism win the war and defeat the non-aggressor nations, including the United States. Has this any relation to our fight to keep America out of war? The closest possible relation.

The Trotskyites have been proven guilty as allies and agents of fascism. Has this anything to do with our fight for democracy in the United States? Of course, it has.

The *New Republic* wants unity of the progressive forces for measures "immediately desirable" in this country. So do we. And no fair-minded person will deny the Communist Party the credit due it for championing and pioneering for this unity.

But Trotskyism is the mortal enemy of this unity—here in this country, the same as everywhere. The Trotskyites are conspiring, with the reactionaries, against the movements for a People's Front; that is an undeniable fact. How then can you fight for the unity of the progressives without driving out of your midst the Trotsky-fascist enemies and disrupters of this unity? It simply can't be done.

The *New Republic* will, we hope, readily agree that the unity of the progressive forces is served best by the unity of labor's forces, labor being a most important part of the progressive camp. But Trotskyism in America (as elsewhere) is a disrupter of labor's forces. That is a well known fact. See the disruptive role of the Trotsky-fascist agents in the Socialist Party, in the Workers' Alliance, and in those unions which they managed to sneak into.

So, we must ask again: how can you fight for the unity of the progressive forces *for any measure* if you refuse to stamp out the poisonous snakes that militate against any sort of unity against reaction and war? It cannot be done.

It may still be possible to close one's eyes to these facts in the quiet of certain editorial offices, but it cannot be done any more in the organizations of the masses and in the struggle for their daily needs. And even in some of these editorial offices, this voluntary blindness cannot continue for long.

Those who fight reaction and war in the United States, and not only talk about it, have at the same time to fight the Trotsky-fascists.

* * *

THE Young Communist League is in the midst of preparations for its Eighth National Convention to be held in New York City, May 2-6, 1937. This national gathering of an important and leading section of the American youth is bound to have most favorable consequences for the further unification and advance of the young generation and for the strengthening of the progressive camp generally.

In the course of the last several

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years, the Young Communist League of America has played a tremendously beneficial, helpful and pioneering role in the coming forward of America's youth to a prominent position in the public arena. America's youth is finding its voice, its organizations, its platform. It is becoming ever more conscious of its special youth needs and progressive role as well as of its close relationship to the labor and progressive movements of the country.

America's youth is coming into its own. And to this the Young Communist League, through its membership, organizations and good leadership, has contributed a good deal.

The League itself has grown in strength, consciousness and influence. Becoming more thoroughly imbued with the spirit and teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the League has broadened out its contacts, has come into most intimate relationships with broad sections of America's non-Communist youth, and has opened for itself broader perspectives of greater service to the youth of America, and hence to the American people, and a wider road to influence and leadership.

Just as the American youth is coming forward to a prominent and progressive position in the public arena, so the working class youth, as part of it, is developing ever greater intitiative in the general affairs of the youth as well as in the labor movement.

Under the leadership of Angelo Herndon, chairman, and Gil Green, secretary, the Young Communist League is preparing for its eighth convention which, as Comrade Green correctly says, "will take place at a time when war is no longer a remote possibility but an alarming actuality". From all these facts and developments, the Young Communist League will have to draw certain conclusions for its future policies and practical work.

All power to our young comrades in the great and important work they are doing. All assistance to them in the preparation of their Eighth National Convention.

A. B.

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THE GREAT AUTO STRIKE

BY WILLIAM WEINSTONE

THE first major battle in the auto industry has just been fought and won. It was unquestionably a great strike, a truly militant battle, waged with a vigor and passion which will place this strike side by side with the greatest strikes in American labor history.

It was a significant struggle because it was the first time in a quarter of a century, the first time since the appearance of the auto industry, that one of the giants of the motor monopolies, the biggest of the three automobile companies, was challenged by organized labor. It was significant because the battle was spread over fourteen states, involved 150,000 workers, affected more than sixty plants, and was fought against a corporation worth one and a half billion dollars. It was significant also because it was the opening battle in the awaited struggle to organize the mass production industries and was fought by the newly organized International Union of United Automobile Workers, led by the Committee for Industrial Organization. And finally, it was of the greatest importance because for the first time on a large scale American labor has employed a new weapon—the sit-down strike—and has wielded this weapon with startling success. That is why the strike aroused nationwide attention and was followed with the most intense interest and concern by millions of working people in all parts of the nation.

The struggle ended with a victory for the auto workers. In what does the victory of the auto workers consist?

It consists in the fact that the union was able completely to paralyze production for forty-four days, to prevent the re-opening of the plants and as a result to wring from General Motors the recognition of the right to organize (a right which has been stubbornly and tenaciously denied by this open shop corporation), won formal recognition as the collective bargaining agency for its members in all the plants and as the sole collective bargaining agency in the plants shut down by the strikes. By this achievement the auto workers struck a powerful blow at the open-shop system in American industry. It also won wage increases for the General Motors workers and increased wages for the auto workers of other plants and it won an agreement to open negotiations between the union and the corporation for demands on wages, hours and working conditions.

The victory of the union consists furthermore in the fact that it was able

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to withstand and repel a series of violent efforts to dislodge the sit-down strikers who left the plants as victors when their terms were met, who twice smashed the injunctions issued against them and finally caused them to be scrapped.

It consists finally in the fact that the policy of industrial unionism, of militant unionism and progressive leadership, based upon rank-and-file democracy, has proven to be the only correct form of organization which can effectively meet and defeat the corporations of big capital. A test has now been made on the field of battle of the craft union versus the industrial union form of organization for the mass production industries and in this test industrial unionism has been entirely and triumphantly upheld.

Let us consider the outcome of the struggle a little more closely.

The union fought for the right to organize the plants. This right was conceded by General Motors in words and denied in deeds by the discharge of workers for joining the union and dismissing of those wearing the union button. These were the issues which caused the strikes in Atlanta and Kansas City. General Motors has now agreed that the workers may organize and that they may wear their union buttons.

The union demanded a *national* conference for collective bargaining. General Motors refused this demand and referred the unions to the individual plant managers. As a result of the strike, such a conference was held and a written agreement between the union and the corporation signed before the shops could be reopened. Now a conference begins to consider the demands of the union.

The union demanded recognition as the sole collective bargaining agency for all the workers. General Motors declared that it would grant no such recognition, holding that to be an inviolable and sacred principle of the corporation. General Motors has now agreed to deal with the union as the exclusive bargaining agency for a period of six months (the exact form of the agreement is only a face saver for General Motors).

General Motors in refusing the request for negotiations declared that it was paying the highest possible wage in the industry but as a result of the strike, it has already declared a five cents hourly increase in wages.

General Motors in its application for an injunction declared that the stay-in strikers were no longer employees of the company but at the end of the strike, as a condition for resuming operations, General Motors agreed to return to all workers their former positions without discrimination.

General Motosr had said that it would not discuss any questions with the union until its plants were evacuated and its "unlawfully seized plants were restored", but General Motors finally backed away from this position, entered into discussion with the union and entered into an agreement, and not until it was signed did the workers leave the plants.

That is why the outcome of the struggle has encouraged the workers everywhere and raised them to a high pitch of enthusiasm. That is why the auto strike is giving direct nourishment and impetus to the drive to or-

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ganize the unorganized workers in the country. That is why, as a result of the struggle, a new wave of strikes is beginning in auto, and other factories, and that is why the *Wall Street Journal* now cries out against the strike that "its effectiveness was obtained by illegal means".

Comrade William Z. Foster is indeed correct when he says that the "auto strike is fated to play a very important part in American labor history" and that "it is a sign of the new era that is dawning in the trade union movement in this country".

HOW WAS THE VICTORY OF THE UNION ACHIEVED?

In the first place, the victory was won because the workers used and perfected the sit-down tactic of striking which we shall describe later along.

In the second place the victory was won because of the fighting determination and profound solidarity which prevailed among the auto workers. The General Motors workers in practically all the states affected by the strike, but particularly in Detroit, Cleveland, Toledo, Norwood, and above all in Flint, operated as a single unit, as an army which responded to every critical situation and to every danger. Toledo and Norwood workers came to Flint in the first days of the strike and greatly strengthened the fighting lines. General Motors, Dodge, Kelsey-Wheel, Midland, Chrysler and other workers from Detroit and also from other cities came spontaneously and repeatedly to the battle front at Flint and were ready to move to Anderson and Saginaw to lend a hand in beating back armed thugs and vigilantes. Workers in Detroit and Toledo shut down the departments of their plants and left for the Flint battlefront. In Flint itself on a number of occasions the workers on the outside, responding more to the prompting of class instincts than to organized calls, came to the plants appearing practically from nowhere to protect the workers on the inside.

Special importance attaches to the great activity of the women workers who organized "women's emergency brigades" in Flint and who were assisted by women's brigades from other cities, who participated directly in the struggles, making up a vanguard of the fighting divisions which added great strength and solidarity to the workers' ranks and cemented their unity. One reason for this mobility and militancy is to be found in the fact that the auto industry is composed largely of young people and these people were on the side of the strike. Another and more basic reason for this militancy is the fact that the auto workers had made several attempts in the past to strike the plants and win the right to organize and were held in check, were deceived and betrayed by the A. F. of L. officialdom and by Roosevelt's agreement of 1934. The workers now gave vent to their accumulated hatred and expressed their determination that this time matters would be changed. All of which reveals the fact that in the last years, particularly since the crisis, the workers have grown in class consciousness, militancy and solidarity.

Third, the victory was won because of the firm and united leadership provided by the C.I.O., which brought to the struggle that degree of aid and unity so essential to large-scale battle

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and which has been lacking in the past in strikes where craft union divisions prevailed. The C.I.O. under the aggressive leadership of John L. Lewis made it possible to maneuver with success the ending of the glass strike at a timely moment so as to exert the greatest pressure upon General Motors. It also helped to work out the strategy of utilizing the competition between General Motors and Chrysler and Ford to the benefit of the strike. The C.I.O. unions sent organizers into the strike, sent delegations and speakers, helped in picketing as, for example, the steel workers in St. Louis and other cities and gave moral and material aid to the auto union.

Fourth, the victory was won because the craft unions in sections of the labor movement outside of the C.I.O. gave their support notwithstanding the treachery and the sabotage of the Greens and the Freys, as for example the support rendered by the Detroit and Flint Federations of Labor, the Michigan State Federation of Labor, and for a time the Cleveland Federation, and numerous craft unions and unionists. This proves that among the A. F. of L. unions there is a strong discontent with the policies of the Executive Council and that it is possible to work hand in hand with the craft unionists against the Executive Council and secure the unity so essential at the present time in the important fights which the C.I.O. and also craft unions will develop.

Fifth, the victory was won because of the progressive leadership of the International union nationally and because of the progressive and militant leadership in the most important areas of the strike. The existence of numerous rank-and-file leaders especially within the plants gave a powerful backbone to the strike because here were people who did not falter or run before the first blows of the enemy. It was because the old Green-Dillon clique had been cleaned out or pushed into the background, especially at the most critical points of the struggle in Flint, Detroit and Cleveland, and a new, fresh, militant leadership had taken its place that the strike could be carried on with such vigor and success.

Sixth, the victory was won because the union carried out modern progressive mass methods of fighting. It engaged in demonstrations and mass picketing; made use of mass agitation through bulletins and special newspapers, made successful use of the sound car; introduced mass singing of labor solidarity songs, and employed the labor theater as a medium of agitation and education (although on a limited scale); organized mass strike committees based on rank-and-file representation; formed relief committees and fought for state aid, and committees to ferret out spies, held frequent mass meetings and gave reports on all developments; carried on educational classes; established solidarity of men and women and unity of Negro and white; and enlisted and welcomed the support of all sections of the labor movement. The union appealed to and received the support of the middle class people, pointing out the advantages to them of a victory of the workers and by stressing the common interests of the workers and small business men in weakening the power of this gigantic trust. It is to be regretted that the union did not fight for and make better

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use of the radio as a means of agitation. Special emphasis must be laid upon the use of the sound car which has proven an indispensable instrument in such fights and should be introduced everywhere. Care must be taken immediately to thwart any attempts to restrict its use by laws, attempts which are being made by stealth in auto and steel areas. These methods, as against the isolated, restricted, narrow and bureaucratic forms employed by the old Green-Dillon officials, have provided the only correct methods to be used in strikes which involve large masses of people.

And, seventh, the victory was won because the union did not hesitate to use political as well as economic weapons of struggle. It fought against and exposed the company-controlled sheriffs, prosecuting attorneys, judges, and police. It demanded the removal of the share-holding Judge Black and strike-breaking Chief of Police Wills of Flint, and laid a demand for the impeachment of the judge before the Michigan State Legislature and the governor. It demanded and secured the deputizing of union men as special police in Anderson. It called upon and secured the aid of the La Follette Committee on Civil Rights, which had the effect of tempering the ruthless violence of the company-dominated local authorities. It demanded full protection of the civil rights of the workers and the right of collective bargaining from the governors of the states, from the Department of Labor, and from the President of the United States, and in that way fought and to a certain extent succeeded in offsetting the one-sided use of the state power, which has always been employed as an agency of strike-breaking. It cooperated with civil rights committees and joined in organizing civil rights conferences, drawing on all sections of the labor movement and middle class people.

The Michigan Conference for the protection of civil rights, as well as the American League Against War and Fascism, proved of inestimable value in promptly organizing local and national protests against company terrorism. In Cleveland the People's Conference for the Protection of Civil Right also served a useful purpose toward the same end.

Special mention must be made of the role of the Flint workers and their leaders. Flint was the main battlefield because it is the heart of the General Motors industry and for that reason the struggle there was most acute. Special tribute must be paid to the workers and leaders of the sit-down strikers in the plants, the leaders and rank-and-file workers, and its chief organizer, who spread the struggle to the Chevrolet plant and held firmly to their positions in the Fisher Body plants to the very last day of the struggle, notwithstanding the violence, the provocations, and the attacks carried out against them. The Flint leaders ably prepared for the strike by the development of a shop steward system, carried out persistent recruiting, exposed and eliminated stool pigeons, and understood the importance of the strike of the bus drivers, which occurred several weeks before the auto fight, rendering them every aid and making the strike their own, and in that way organizing favorable sentiment in the city for unionism. In return they were well rewarded for their

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efforts by the assistance rendered them by this small but important body of workers. Had the old group of leaders that belonged to the Dillon clique and that worked hand in hand with the General Motors Corporation remained in control in the Flint situation, the outcome of the strike against General Motors would have been entirely different.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT

Finally but of first-rate importance among the reasons for the victory must be considered the attitude of the government. By the government I mean in this case the attitude of the Governor of the State of Michigan and of President Roosevelt. The defeat of the reactionaries in the last election created more favorable conditions for the winning of the strike, for it gave encouragement to the workers and was the signal that the moment was ripe to start the battle. It brought into office in Lansing and Washington, administrations which had promised to assist the workers in obtaining improved standards of living and the right of collective bargaining. Had the Landon Republicans come into office they would have taken the usual hard-boiled Tory attitude on labor unionism and strikes.

Lenin has noted two methods of rule of the capitalist class. He says:

"The bourgeoisie in all countries in practice inevitably elaborates two systems of governing, two methods of struggle for its interests and for the defense of its domination, and these two methods now replace one another and interlace in different combinations. These are, first, the method of violence, the method of refusing all concessions to the labor movement, the method of supporting all ancient and dying institutions, the method of uncompromising rejection of reform. . . . The second method is the method of 'liberalism', of steps toward the development of political rights, of reforms, of concessions, etc.

"The bourgeoisie passes from one method to another not through the malicious design of individuals and not by accident, but by force of the basic contradictoriness of its own position."

This is the type of government which rules today in Lansing and Washington. And the contradictoriness which Lenin notes in such a position was present even in the short period of the strike.

The policies of Murphy and Roosevelt were to seek a compromise in the struggle, to avoid a sharpening of the conflict, and to terminate it as early as possible, not only because of the militant mood of labor and the danger of the struggle passing over to other sections of the labor movement, but also because of the pressure of a section of the capitalist class which found the strike harmful to its interests. The government had to face the outcry of the reactionaries, the big capitalist interests, that the sanctity of private property was being violated, and Governor Murphy was called upon to uphold the Constitution, "to defend private property", to support the courts, and to use the National Guard to evacuate the plants. There was the ever-present danger that this pressure would succeed. At one time the National Guard established virtual martial law around the Chevrolet and Fisher No. 2 plants and virtually imprisoned the sit-downers.

If the National Guard was not used it was due to the fact that both Governor Murphy and President Roosevelt faced a stiff resistance of the workers and because they realized that the use

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of violence with the danger of killing many workers would have aroused the working class of the entire country, would have meant a sharp break with their labor support, would have meant a shattering blow to the Democratic Party, and would have led to a tremendous development of the movement for the independent political action which asserted itself in the last election campaign although on a restricted scale.

Consider the forceful position taken by the union. The telegrams of the sit-down strikers addressed to Governor Murphy and President Roosevelt are classical not only because of the passion and self-sacrifice which they expressed, but also because they voiced the insistence of labor that history shall not repeat itself and the promises made in the last election broken. Let us quote from one of these telegrams to the Governor of Michigan:

"We feel it proper to recall to you the assurance you have many times given to the public that you would not permit force or violence to be used in ousting us from the plants. Unarmed as we are, the introduction of militia, sheriff or police with murderous weapons, will mean a blood bath of unarmed workers. The police of Flint belong to General Motors. The sheriff of Genesee County belongs to General Motors, and the judges of Genesee County belong to General Motors. . . . *It remains to be seen whether or not the governor of this state also belongs to General Motors.* We have decided to stay in the plants. We have no illusions what sacrifices this decision will entail. We fully expect that if violent efforts are used to put us out, many of us will be killed. We take this method to make it known to our wives, our children, and to the people of the state and country, that if this result follows from the attempts to eject us, *you are the one who must be held responsible for our death.*" (Emphasis mine—W. W.)

It was because of this forceful position of labor, and it was because of the growing movement for independent political action, that any compromise was prevented that would injure the interests of the strike and the union.

DID THE UNION WIN ITS FULL OBJECTIVE?

Did the union win the full objective which it set for itself? No, the union did not win completely its major demand of becoming the sole collective bargaining agency nor was it able to achieve the negotiations of its economic demands while the strike was still in progress and the plants still shut down. It is not to be expected that in the first round of battle, all the demands can be won, because of the huge wealth of the corporation, its entrenched position in the local communities, its strong political power and the backing which it received from the steel and financial magnates, and on the other hand the youthfulness of the union. General Motors proved a ruthless enemy which did not hesitate to use every means, foul or fair, to achieve its end of breaking the strike.

It is clear that such a corporation can be fully defeated and brought to its knees only by bending the full energies of the union, only by demonstrating the greatest strength, and only by succeeding in organizing the largest numbers of workers into the union before the battle begins. The union did not prove strongly enough organized to reach this goal.

What are the facts about organization? At the outset of the strike the union succeeded in organizing a majority of workers within approximately twenty plants. It was where the plants were organized to any considerable extent that they were shut down

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by strikes. The facts are that not all the plants were well organized in Flint, Detroit, or in Michigan, generally, the most strategic centers of General Motors, and that such strongholds as Pontiac, Saginaw, and Grand Rapids, were practically unorganized. It is true that the union shut down the strategic Fisher Body plants in Flint and Cleveland and that this worked greatly to the advantage of the union in paralyzing the industry. The very audacity of the union in challenging a corporation which held undisputed sway encouraged the workers and brought many thousands into the union during the strike, but still this was not enough for an industry employing hundreds of thousands and indirectly affecting the jobs of a million. The union attempted to widen the sphere of the strike but its forces were too weak to achieve success. The union was therefore confronted with the dilemma of having carried through a *general shutdown* without having carried through and declared a *general strike* in all the plants. While some 40,000 to 50,000 were affected directly by strikes, another 100,000 workers were thrown out of work. This gave General Motors the possibility of crying "that a minority was attempting to dictate to the majority", to make the struggle appear as a battle between union and non-union workers, to keep a large number of workers on the sidelines, and to create to a certain extent a popular mass cover for the usual strong-arm methods. This they did through such organizations as the Flint Alliance, through petition campaigns (obviously inspired by General Motors and carried through by coercion but nevertheless successful because of the lack of organizations in such places), through organizing mass meetings of "loyal workers", and by staging what might be called a "pro-company rebellion", through sending delegations to the governor of the state, and in general creating the danger of a strong back-to-work movement. This enabled General Motors also to raise the cry that it was serving to protect the rights of non-union members.

The A. F. of L. officialdom did its bit in helping this movement of the corporation along, especially since these officials fell in with the tactics of the corporation which claimed that other workers were opposed to the union as the sole collective bargaining agency. But, basically, the opposition to the strike and the counter-movement attempted by the corporation had its foundation in the company unions which were practically untouched in the preparations of the strike. This insufficiency of organization and weakness in failing to break into new territories at one stage of the struggle gave the offensive to the side of General Motors and seriously threatened the outcome of the strike. It was at this moment that the Flint workers and their leader, Robert Travis, conceived and executed a brilliant move in achieving the sit-down in the Chevrolet Assembly Plant No. 4 which once again gave the initiative into the hands of the strikers and which virtually put an end to the back-to-work movement started by General Motors. It was at this moment, too, that the Flint workers stopped a bogging of the strike and a weakening of the ranks as a result of the defeat suffered at Anderson, where the leadership was driven out by vigilantes and

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also because of a mistake made in calling off the Saginaw meeting.

The insufficiency of organization must be attributed to the fact that while the union had planned to attack General Motors and to develop a general strike, actually there was a more or less spontaneous outbreak of the struggle. The fight against General Motors began at Atlanta with the strike on November 18, followed several weeks later by the strike at Kansas City, and towards the last week in December there took place the sit-downs at Cleveland followed the next day by sit-downs in Fisher No. 1 and No. 2 at Flint. A contributing factor here was the glass strike which threatened to shut down the auto industry and which made many feel that it was advisable to hit the blow before such a shut-down occurred. But there is no doubt that General Motors allowed the strike movement to develop in order to bring matters to a head, thinking that the union was entirely unprepared and would be defeated.

General Motors had expected to win. It thought that the armed force which it could put into action against the strikers through its complete control of the local authorities would enable them to end the strike in double quick time. Why then did the calculations of General Motors prove false? It was because General Motors did not reckon with the leadership of the C.I.O. and the militancy of the workers and because it was entirely unprepared for and unable to meet and overcome the new tactic of the workers —the sit-down strike.

SIT-DOWN STRIKE TACTICS

The big corporations know how to deal with a walkout strike but General Motors did not know how to deal with the sit-down strike. The attempts to use the usual methods of securing an injunction, illegalizing the strike, and breaking up the picket lines by armed force, as they attempted to do in Flint and in the battle before Fisher No. 2 (now named the "Battle of Bulls Run", because the police did the running on that day) failed miserably and only enhanced the prestige of the union while arousing the indignation of the masses. The attempt to cut off the heat and food proved a boomerang. The General Motors workers and especially the Flint workers developed this weapon to the highest degree.

First of all they strategically locked themselves in, making it difficult to dislodge them without the use of considerable force and numbers, while at the same time by taking over the gates, they obtained the possibility of freely coming and going and thereby relieved the strain which they would otherwise have found a serious factor in their "voluntary imprisonment". Thus, by coming and going in shifts, they were able to hold out for a long time and thereby improved the methods of continually staying in the plants which was the practice in the Midland Steel, Kelsey-Hayes, American Aluminum and other Detroit auto strikes.

Second, they developed a complete and efficient organization within the plant, establishing a strike committee, and various sub-committees, and captains, including health and sanitation, patrol and policing, trial committee (kangaroo court), and by means of such organization exercised the greatest vigilance and control, developing

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fully both the strategy and the means of defense against any attacks. The workers virtually barricaded themselves within the plants and prepared themselves to use all devices available (but emphatically barred fire-arms) within the plant to hold their positions. In the Fisher No. 1 Plant in Flint, the sit-down strikers covered the windows with bullet-proof metal sheets through which fire hoses could be put out to meet any gas or fire-arm attack. They organized and drilled squads in the use of the water hoses for quick and efficient service. They organized a police patrol which made the rounds at given hours to detect any untoward movement of people in adjoining wings of the building occupied by the office help so as not to be caught by surprise attacks, etc.

Third, they combined the method of sitting down within the plant with a system of outside car picket patrol, which was supplemented by the union by daily outside meetings through a public address system, carried on by the use of sound cars. This was further supplemented by large-scale demonstrations arranged by the union to meet any critical situation, such as the threat of evacuation on the basis of the injunction. Such a combination of an inside strike with outside mass mobilization and support rendered the use of the sit-down most effective. It was because of this organized mass support that the corporation was frustrated in its efforts to dislodge them. For example on the day when the evacuation was expected, following the issuance of the injunction, about 3,000 workers formed a picket line before Fisher No. 1 at Flint, and many thousands more were present, ready to pitch into battle if the evacuation was attempted.

Fourth, they worked out the strategy of organizing a sit-down in the face of the massing of numerous company guards who were ready to use firm-arms to prevent the occurrence of a sit-down. This they did in connection with the sit-down in Chevrolet Plant No. 4. The move executed by the Flint strike leadership consisted in arranging a sit-down strike of the workers in Plant No. 9, sending outside union men and women to give them support, and in that way engaged the attention of the company thugs of Plant No. 9 and those of other plants, and while the battle raged here, organized a march from Plant No. 6 to Plant No. 4 which was the better organized and a more strategic plant because it produces motors for all Chevrolet cars, and effected the successful sit-down in this plant. Thus they combined a march from other plants as reinforcements for the main point of attack.

We must properly evaluate this new tactic of the workers. The sit-down strike has arisen spontaneously from the ranks of the workers and is a new weapon forged to meet the problems of struggle against the big corporations. It is a tactic, however, which is already being employed in small as well as large factories, in industrial as well as other plants. It is becoming the principal form of strike struggle at the present time and for that reason must be paid the closest attention in order to impart to this method the greatest consciousness and efficiency. Experience shows what the great teachers of the working class movement, Marx and Lenin, have emphasized many times, that new forms of struggle will inevitably arise as special conditions change,

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"forms hitherto unseen by active people in the movement".

The sit-down strike is not the old syndicalist tactic of the folded arm strike, nor the application of the theory of the militant minority (the idea that a small group of resolute people can impose its will upon large masses and by their sheer determination drag them along irrespective of their sentiments and convictions). While the number actually sitting within the plants was a minority of the workers of the factory, nonetheless, the sit-down strike was successful because these workers represented and were supported by a big majority of the workers of the shop. There is no doubt that the sit-down strikes of the French workers have had the most profound influence in introducing this instrument among the American workers, but changed conditions have favored the use of the sit-down strike here.

What are these conditions? At first sight is the experiences of the workers in their struggle against the big industrialists in which they found themselves beset by brutal force, the breaking up of the picket lines and use of hired strike-breakers and other acts of violence. It must be remembered that in 1930, the picket line of Fisher Plant No. 1 in Flint was broken up and driven out of the city en masse by the chief of police. This lesson was not lost upon the Fisher Body workers.

Secondly, the last elections and the defeat of the economic royalists have given to the workers the feeling that the government was on their side, would protect them against the big corporations, and would not so readily come out against them as a strike-breaking agency. Thirdly is the growth in consciousness and understanding of the workers of their strategic importance in the mass production set-up, the inter-dependence of departments and plants, and thus their ability to match the strength of the corporation by their power to interrupt and halt the whole process of production by stopping the movement of the belt.

But the use of the sit-down, the "occupation" of the plant property reveal that deeper forces have been at work in the course of the last years.

Let us consider the question of property and property rights. General Motors and the ruling class press everywhere set up a howl against the sit-downers, that they had taken over the factory, and were trespassing upon the rights of the owners. Mr. Sloan spoke about "holding the factory for ransom". And the pretentious quack scholar, John P. Frey of the American Federation of Labor, followed in his footsteps with occupation of the factories. Editorials were written about the sit-down becoming a daily habit in the life of the people. "How would you like it if a stranger came into your house and squatted in your dining room and refused to leave." Such was the theme of the editorials and news articles turned out in reams by the capitalist writers. This was intended to shake the morale of the workers, to scare the small property owners and turn them against the strike, and to bring pressure upon the authorities—"sworn to uphold property rights and the constitution". But matters did not turn out that way. The workers did not sit down in the factories in order to take them over and dispossess General Motors. They did not carry out "expropriation", but instead

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carefully guarded the property and in fact prided themselves that they took care of the property and machines "far better than the plant guards". They declared their readiness to leave the plants if they were given the assurances and were guaranteed that the plants would not be put into operation until a settlement was reached. The workers did not at all feel themselves strangers in another man's home. As the *Flint Auto Worker* pointed out, the workers of the plant were part and parcel of the factory. They spent more days, weeks and years in them than did the owners, many of whom have never seen the factory and have not spent a single day within its walls. And thus the workers were not motivated by revolutionary aims in occupying the plants but were limiting themselves to a form of pressure to achieve their immediate ends.

They were encroaching upon the rights of the capitalists—"capitalist rights"—the right of unlimited exploitation and ruthless oppression, and were asserting labor's rights, the right to a decent livelihood under human conditions of work. But does this not happen in a walk-out strike, when workers cease to labor and stop the working of the machinery (the property of the capitalists), stop the hiring of scabs and interfere with the "sacred right" of the capitalists to make profits, just as long as they ignore the needs of the working people? And has this not always been the cry of the capitalists against strikes? Only here, to be sure, we have a more advanced form of this "interference" with the sacred and let it be said tyrannical property rights.

Nonetheless, in this action, we see the maturing of the idea among the workers that the factories are not merely the sole property of the owners to do with and to handle as they see fit, but that there are human rights to be safeguarded and that these rights must take precedence over property rights. Here we see the greater consciousness of the position of the workers as wage slaves. Here we see the emergence of the working class as a class. Here we see the sharp alignment of the classes within the country—a development which is finding and will find its expression on the political field. An epochal change is taking place in the mentality of the working class. The years of the depression and crisis have shattered the old relationships, have lowered the prestige of the ruling class and have raised the independence and self-assertedness of labor. It is this new strength of the working class which General Motors and their henchmen encountered in Flint and other General Motors strongholds; and it is this strength which they tried to break through the organization of the Flint Alliance, a combination of foremen, superintendents and local business men, dependent upon General Motors. It was because of this strength that the local authorities began to deputize loyal citizens and threatened to go down to the plants to "shoot it out". Had it not been for the cool-headedness of the union leadership, a local civil war could have been precipitated by the "guardians of law and order".

The big corporations in meeting with sit-down strikes will undoubtedly repeat the tactics of General Motors. The cry against alleged expropriation will continue. This attitude of the corporations will make the strike struggles extremely acute. For that reason, in sit-down strikes, the union must see

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to it that the aims of the strike are clearly set forth to the whole population, that it imparts to the middle class —the merchants and professional people—clear knowledge of the purpose of the strike and in that way align the middle elements on the side of the union and the strike, and that the union leadership hold firmly to their rights and do not waver before the propaganda onslaughts of the corporations.

Wherein are the special advantages of the sit-down tactic? Observation of a number of strikes leads me to think that the following are among the most important reasons for the introduction of this tactic:

Sit-down strikes give to the workers a greater feeling of strength and security because the strikers are inside the plants, in the solid confines of the factory, at the machines which are the sources of their livelihood, instead of away from the plant, moving around in "empty space", on the sidewalks surrounding the factories.

Sit-down strikes give to the workers greater sureness that there are no scabs within the plants and no production is being carried on and makes it difficult to run in scabs. For example, in the walkout strike, the great problem is that of picketing. Mass picketing—throwing of large masses around the factory gates—is of the utmost importance if scabs are to be kept out but even then the problem is extremely difficult in view of the size of the factory and the numerous entrances. Take the Fisher Body No. 1 plant at Flint. This takes up an area of one-half mile around and requires large masses concentrated at a great number of points throughout the day and night. With the sit-down strike the problem of picketing is reduced for with the workers sitting in, a relatively smaller picket patrol (this is absolutely essential so that the workers inside know what is going on outside) is sufficient to guard against the infiltration of scabs.

The sit-down strike furthermore makes it difficult to resume operations even partially where scabs have gotten in because by holding down one section of the plant. it is hard to begin operations.

The sit-down strike affords strikers greater possibility of defending themselves against the violence of the police and company men because they are inside the plants and are able to bar the way of the attackers and also are able to organize means of defense and when an attack does occur, the public understands clearly who are the attackers.

The sit-down strike makes for a greater discipline, group consciousness and comradeship among the strikers because of the very position in which they find themselves and thereby enhances the militancy and fighting spirit of the workers.

Finally, the sit-down strike arouses the widest sympathy and support among the working population because of the courage of the workers in taking "possession" of the factory and because of the self-sacrifice and hardship which such action entails. This is particularly the case of industrial communities where the factory is the center of everything.

Of course, the sit-down strike creates its own set of difficulties and problems. The question of sleeping within the plant, of contacts with the families, of feeding the workers, of holding the

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workers within the plants, of keeping out company men, of guarding against provocations, of the danger of the stoppage of heat and food, of organizing sets of inside and outside strike committees, the timely switching from an inside to an outside strike when the lines do not hold, etc., all of which requires careful study in order to readjust the methods of strike organization to the problems of sit-down.

The use of the sit-down method of strike does not do away with the general tactics and strategy in the operation of strike struggles, that of the necessity for adequate mass preparation of the strikes, of the building up of the union as the basis of the strike, or of achieving the largest amount of mass support among the workers of the plant—all features of good strike organization which have generally been employed in the walkout tactic. I have in mind, of course, the features of an organized strike.

The sit-down tactic caught the corporations unprepared but already they are developing counter methods to defeat it. These methods include the enlargement of company police, the organization of special groups of "loyal workers" forcibly to eject sit-down strikers, to organize their plants in such a way as to make an approach to the factory more difficult and thereby isolate and starve out the workers.

The sit-down strike is not an exclusive method of strike. It does not replace the walkout strike tactic. Both will be used but *we must state that the sit-down tactic is now part of the arsenal of weapons which unionism is using, will use and can use in the struggle against the exploiters.*

TASKS NOW FACING THE UNION

The position of the United Automobile Workers has been greatly strengthened as a result of the strike, but it has still before it the task of the negotiation of an agreement on the question of wages, hours and working conditions. It has won an agreement but the agreement has only the value of the organized strength behind it. General Motors will contest every inch of the ground in order to prevent the union from capitalizing on its enhanced prestige and to prevent it from becoming the only union in the industry. It will therefore require the utmost vigilance on the part of the union and continuous activity in order that it may win a satisfactory settlement of its demands. Strong arm methods used in Anderson and other places show that General Motors will not yet abandon the field to the union.

The most important thing is to consolidate the newly gained membership and to entrench itself firmly within the plants. Consolidation means above all the establishment of an efficient shop steward system. Through the establishment of a department shop steward system the union will have the forces to carry on recruitment, to defend the conditions of the workers in the shop, to take care of the grievances, and to bar the way to the company men who will seek to create confusion and steer the workers away from the union. The establishment of a strong shop steward system requires the carrying through of elections, department by department, plant by plant, instructing the shop stewards in their tasks, and, above all, securing shop stewards who have proven themselves to be mili-

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tant and active men, who have demonstrated their loyalty and reliability in the course of the strike. In the election of shop stewards, non-union members as well as union members should have the right to participate, and in that way the shop stewards will truly represent all the workers of the department.

The necessity for a vigorous recruiting campaign is obvious, particularly in those strategic places which General Motors held out against the union. It is also essential because General Motors will carry through maneuvers to build up a competing union. The ineffectiveness of the company union will undoubtedly compel General Motors to seek to build up an independent organization which will remain a creature of the company. Here the American Federation of Labor will be more than ready to help out the corporation and to provide an apparent independent front for a company union set-up. Already in Cleveland, there are signs that the A. F. of L. bureaucrats intends to move in and use whatever membership the company union elements can provide it in order to establish a rival organization. It will be necessary to expose this move and to show up these reactionaries as coming in only with the object of dividing the ranks of the workers and destroying the effectiveness of the International Auto Workers Union. But at the same time, the union must be prepared where its own ranks are too weak within certain departments to send forces into such a set-up with the object of wresting away the leadership of such independent union and in that way disrupting the tactics of the company.

The consolidation and development of the union require, furthermore, the continuation of the labor papers that have been issued by the union during the strike and the establishment of papers of the union where none have existed and the building up of sports groups, athletic teams, glee clubs, dramatic groups, educational classes, the enlargement of the women's auxiliary—all of which will powerfully reinforce the union strength.

Nor can the union ignore the challenge which has been issued to it by the local authorities who have shown themselves to be tools of the company. And in such places as Flint and other industrial communities controlled by General Motors as well as in Detroit, the union must consider the question of electing union men into political office, to oust the General Motors politicians, and to build up local labor parties in order to achieve that aim.

The General Motors strike has set the ball rolling. Other plants are stepping into line. Strikes are growing in the independent as well as in the plants of the other big corporations. The question of an agreement with Chrysler will soon be placed upon the order of the day. The question of the organization of Ford is not a far distant question. The union should discuss the lessons from the General Motors struggle in order to fully prepare itself to tackle these points.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE AUTO STRIKE

Among the auto workers there are former miners and others who have had many years of labor experience. Their experience made for added solidarity and discipline. In this strike and the union there were also radical-

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minded workers and among this group, in the first place, must be mentioned the work of the Communist members of the union as well as the work of the Communist Party itself.

What were the activities of the Communists? The Communists and the Communist Party gave the most loyal backing and support to the strike, to the aims, policies and activities of the union and the C.I.O. The Communists worked ardently and earnestly in helping to build up the union and tried in every way possible to properly prepare the strike so that it would rest upon a strong foundation. In the strike itself the Communists sought to imbue the strikers and the workers generally with the greatest discipline, organization and perserverance. There is no doubt that the fact that the Communists were active, particularly at the most decisive points of the struggle, that there the strike was strongest, and this made for the success of the whole battle. The Communist workers combatted any tendency to waver in the face of the sharp blows of the enemy and helped to keep the ranks as firm as possible.

The Party members, not only in the areas of the strike but in various parts of the country, gave moral and material aid, helped to collect food and funds, arranged solidarity meetings, helped the union in the distribution of its material, and gave practical assistance in other ways. The Communist Party early recognized and sought to impress upon every one the decisive importance of Flint as the main battleground of the struggle, and in that way aided in keeping the eyes of the entire country upon Flint so as to render that front the greatest assistance.

The *Daily Worker* contained many columns of news about the strike, editorials and articles, which pointed out the problems of the strike struggle, which tried to foresee and warn against the many dangers that lurked ahead in the battle. It issued a special supplement of 25,000 copies each and a total of 150,000 copies, which was undoubtedly of aid to the strike, and in such places as Cleveland, the Communists in the strike issued a special shop paper which dealt with problems of the strike at the Fisher Body plant.

The existence of groups of Communists within the shops was undoubtedly of great help because thereby a core of experienced people were in the shops to help in the solution of the new problems connected with the sit-down. The shop form of organization, the shop groups (units), has more than justified itself. Where the Party organization paid attention to these units, there the efforts of many years of work were fully rewarded. The shop unit form of organization and the attention to the shops are of even greater importance today with the development of the sit-down strike methods.

There were some who raised objections to the distribution of the *Daily Worker* in the shops among the strikers, but quite generally the workers welcomed the paper and did not interfere with the right of the Communist Party to distribute its material. The "Red scare" which was raised at times although timidly and mostly by company men did not take effect because the workers had learned that where such scares are created against Communists and where discrimination occurs against the activities of one section of the labor movement, there the company succeeds in dividing the

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ranks, there the strike becomes weakened and there it is easiest for company men to get the upper hand. Where democratic policies prevail and the opinion of all groups is allowed, there the consciousness of the workers is highest and the greatest unity and militancy obtain. The more united the struggle, the better the fight and the greater the success.

Can it be said that everything was done by the Communists and the Communist Party that was possible to help the strike? No, this cannot be said. Not all Party organizations or all Party members participated in assisting the strike struggle, a fault which shows that the Party is not yet sufficiently mobilized for joining in the economic fights and that sectarian tendencies which keep Party members away from this most vital task are still prevalent. But this is also related to the insufficient connection and leadership of the county and state committees with the branches and membership. The lack of Party organization in such places as Pontiac, Anderson and Saginaw, made it impossible for the Party to render assistance at these places, a situation which must be corrected in the near future.

The rise of a new labor movement in the auto centers, the growth of strike struggles, places before the Party more acutely than ever before the necessity for making the factories and trade unions the center of its attention, in order that it might be of greatest assistance. The distribution of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*, of literature, must center chiefly around the shops and the unions, for the workers are now ready and willing to hear all points of view with respect to the problems and tasks of the labor movement. The organization of a speakers' bureau and the enlargement of the work of agitation and education are also badly needed, so as to impart to the working class movement a knowledge of the workings of the labor movement and of the social and political problems confronting it, and in that way aid in planting the flag of trade unionism firmly over the giant factories of the country and to enlarge and strengthen the social and class vision of the workers.

It is especially urgent to put on a real recruiting drive, to win to the Party the ranks of active people, and in that way enable the Party to root itself in the shops, to enlarge its contacts, and to strengthen itself as an organization which is influential among the mass of auto workers. But of great urgency is the necessity of showing to the workers the face of the Party, to show the workers what the Party is doing so that it may have a full appreciation of the importance of the activities of Communists in the working class struggle. This was by no means done to any sufficient extent during the strike.

It is also interesting to discuss the activity of other working class groups, particularly that of the Socialist Party. At several points of the struggle, members of the Socialist Party showed worthwhile activity and their activities were of help to the union. These were Socialists who were not infected with the poison of Trotskyism or influenced to any large extent by the sectarianism of the "militant Socialists", but followed a true course of mass struggle. In the strike the Communists cooperated with these Socialist

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Party members (although not on the basis of any formal pact) and such cooperation proved fruitful.

But the same cannot be said of the line of policy pursued by the Socialist Party through the columns of its leading organ, the *Socialist Call*. While devoting considerable space to the strike, its policies were by no means free from sectarianism. Take for example the article of Frank Trager in the *Socialist Call* of February 6. Here he states that the offensive which took place in Flint during that week "was under the spirited leadership of the Socialist leaders". This statement is not only guilty of unjustified boasting but, what is worse, separates the leadership of Flint from the general leadership of the union and the C.I.O., and also dismisses the leadership of militants who occupied the most strategic points in Flint and who are by no means Socialists. But the harmful sectarianism is to be found in another part of his article in which he states that the offensive took place because "the Flint auto workers discarded the futile strategy of long conferences and round table negotiations". The inference here is that the leadership of the union was wasting its time in useless negotiations (while the workers were favoring action) and thanks to the Socialist Party they finally received it. This is a complete distortion of the situation and what is more, reveals a lack of understanding of the tactics of strike leadership. This apparent emphasis upon "action" and scorn for "talk" appear indeed very "revolutionary" and are the latest fad of some leaders of the Socialist Party. But any knowledge of the situation shows that the action in Flint in taking Chevrolet's Plant No. 4 became ripe only with the rise in union membership during the strike. It also followed on the heels of the discrediting of the General Motors officials due to their very failure to enter into negotiations in Washington, followed the rebuke which Secretary Perkins administered to Mr. Sloan, which raised the morale of the workers and sharpened their militancy and determination without which it would have been difficult to have carried through such a sharp battle and such tactics as were involved in the sit-down in Chevrolet No. 4. In general it must be said that the negotiations carried on by the union leadership and the C.I.O., in contrast to the negotiations of the old Green and Dillon group, set a new mark in the practice of labor leaders in making use of negotiations and conferences not to injure but to aid the work of the men and women on the picket lines.

Nor can we dismiss the comment made by Norman Thomas in his column of January 30 on the question of the sit-down. On the one hand, he endorses the sit-down strike as a weapon which has obvious advantages for the workers "beautifully demonstrated in Flint where the spirit and discipline of the workers have been remarkable". On the other hand, he remarks that because "the sit-down strike properly used is a powerful weapon for the workers—it does not follow that it has no dangers", and says, "if it is used for the advantage of some small group rather than for the advantage of the whole body of workers, if it is used without discipline; if it is used so as to create public hostility, then the sit-down strike is not an advantage".

It must be remembered that this was written at the very moment when the

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General Motors Corporation was publishing full-page ads and the entire press of the country was crying out that a small group was keeping large masses out of work, at a moment also when the capitalists were trying to give the impression that the public was aligned against the sit-down strike method. Of what use is moralizing on the sit-down and discussion of its disadvantages at such a moment? Such a moment requires unqualified, unconditional support, and emphasis upon the importance of the new weapon, so that the workers may master this new weapon and hold firmly to it, for any wavering or doubt as to its usefulness would only have assisted in weakening the resistance to the intended evacuation. What conclusions did Norman Thomas draw from these remarks? He drew the moral "that the all important thing is not the particular kind of strike but the kind of union which the workers build". Here is the essence of the underestimation and wavering upon the question of the sit-down which the above remarks revealed, for in fact the particular kind of union that was being built depended upon the very success of the kind of strike which was being used, and contrary to Thomas the all important thing was the most effective use of the "particular kind of strike" which the workers were carrying through.

And, lastly, a few remarks upon the disruptive activity of a little sect of Trotskyist followers in Detroit known as the Revolutionary Workers Group—a split off and variant of the main Trotskyist body. This group at the height of the struggles, at the very moment that the vigilantes were seeking a pretext to attack and when the workers had organized a formidable demonstration of their strength, issued a leaflet the substance of which was to warn the workers "against the C.I.O. disarming them and to call for the formation of 'workers' guard". Such propaganda which was emphatically condemned and repudiated by the workers and by the Communist Party was just the very thing which the company needed to reinforce its campaign of violence. Such activities and propaganda have not the slightest semblance of any revolutionary activities, although the name of the group has a revolutionary title, and has far more in common with the type of work which enemies of the labor movement would conduct—the work of little reactionaries and disrupters parading as a section of the labor movement.

In conclusion, the strike of the automobile workers reveals the new forces that are at work within the country, forces which are driving toward an extension and strengthening of the labor movement and which are welding also the unity of the working class and of all progressive-minded people, a process which is giving rise to the growth of a real people's movement—a real people's united front—a movement which will embrace also the most aggressive revolutionary-minded section of the working class—the Communists and the Communist Party. The full effects of the great and dramatic auto strike of 1937 will be felt in the coming struggles ahead of us. It will prove to be a landmark in American labor history.

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THE LESSONS OF THE MARITIME STRIKES

BY ROY HUDSON

THE struggle of the maritime workers, which was finally concluded with substantial victories for them, was provoked by the shipowners who timed their attack with, and as part of, the general offensive of reactionary capital in the election campaign. This historic struggle started at the peak of the election campaign and continued long into the so-called era of "good feeling" that was promised by the reactionaries following their rebuff in the elections.

Both the great auto and marine strikes show that the American workers are not so gullible as to be fooled about the poppycock of an era of good feeling which was supposed to have followed the elections and that this talk was but a smokescreen to hide the continued offensive of the Liberty Leaguers to realize their election program. This can be seen by any one who looks at the General Motors strike; at the demands for reduction in relief and W. P.A. appropriations, not to mention the fresh outbursts of reaction's spokesman, Hearst, and the resurrection of Father Coughlin. In the national marine strike, more than any other recent struggle of the American workers, we see most clearly the planned character of this offensive; the extent to which the forces of reaction have crystallized and organized, and what their objectives are.

The marine struggle did not catch the employers unexpected; on the contrary, they were quite conscious of the strength of the workers and knew its probable costs, which were in fact $7,000,000 daily, or a total loss of $686,000,000 on the Pacific Coast alone! Incidentally, in preparation for the struggle the shipowners are reputed to have amassed, by a tonnage tax, a war chest of $200,000,000. The shipowners provoked the maritime strike by refusing, after three months of negotiations last fall, to meet the demands of the Pacific Maritime Unions, because they were prepared to risk the tremendous losses that such a struggle would involve, because they were determined to wipe out the gains of 1934, and weaken and, if possible, smash the powerful Western unions, check the growth and strengthening of the unions in the East and Gulf and deal a powerful blow at the growing progressive forces of America.

Not only were the Pacific Maritime Unions successful in defeating this offensive of the shipowners, but by organizing a counter-offensive, they were successful in maintaining their gains

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of 1934, in strengthening their unions, and the Maritime Federation, and in forcing the shipowners to grant the basic demands of the unions. The following table shows what was won by the Pacific Coast maritime unions:

EMPLOYERS' OFFER SEPT. 30	UNIONS' BASIC DEMANDS	WHAT UNIONS WON
	General	
Arbitration	Direct negotiations	Agreements by direct negotiations
	International Longshoremen's Association	
8-hr. day	6-hr. day	6-hr. day
Employer-controlled hiring	Union hiring hall (Preference of employment)	Union hiring hall (Preference of employment)
	Sailors' Union	
Optional overtime	Cash overtime pay	Cash overtime pay
Employer-controlled hiring	Union hiring hall	Union hiring hall
Basic wage $62.50	Basic rate $90	$10 increase
	Cooks and Stewards	
Unlimited hours	8-hr. day	8 hrs. on freighters 9 hrs. on passengers
Optional overtime	Cash overtime pay	Cash overtime pay
Employer-controlled hiring	Union hiring hall	Union hiring hall
	Radio Operators	
Employer-controlled hiring	Preference of employment	Preference of employment
Previous wage scale	Wage increase	Wage increase
	Marine Engineers	
Employer-controlled hiring	Preference of employment	Recognition of union
Previous wage scale	Wage increase	Selection of men from union hall $15 wage increase
	Masters, Mates and Pilots	
Employer-controlled hiring		Union recognition
Non-union masters	Preference of employment	Selection of men from union hall
Previous wage scale	Wage increase	Wage increase

The Pacific Coast struggle not only rallied the support of the seamen and licensed crafts in the East and Gulf, support which was vital to insuring victory on the Coast, but also enabled the strikers in these districts to register achievements of the greatest significance, even though the inability to extend the struggle to the longshoremen, due mainly to the strikebreaking policy of J. P. Ryan of the I.L.A., as well as the scab-herding officials of the I.S.U., prevented them from maintaining the original effectiveness of the strike and forced them to conclude their strike on the basis of a partial victory. Nevertheless, they secured gains which are not yet understood thoroughly by the labor movement. Their strike forced the announcement that "peaceful

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negotiations" between the former I.S.U. officials and the shipowners had resulted in the following:

$10 to $12.50 wage increases in all departments.

$2.70 an hour overtime pay.

The eight-hour day for Engine and Deck Departments.

Hours in Stewards Department are to be eight hours a day in port, nine hours on freighters and 10 hours on passenger.

In comparison with the Pacific Coast conditions, we see that a number of things, especially the basic question of union hiring, have not yet been secured in the East. Nevertheless, the strike resulted in bringing wages and working conditions generally up to that won on the Pacific Coast. In addition to this, the strikers in the East and Gulf considered, when they voted to end the strike, that they had won the following additional things through their struggle.

"Our strike has been a major factor in helping defeat the union-smashing schemes of the Pacific shipowners.

"Our strike has established closer unity between the East, Gulf and West coasts. We have established closer unity between the licensed and unlicensed crafts. We have helped strengthen the fight of the I.L.A. membership against the strikebreaking, dictatorial policies of J. P. Ryan. For the first time effectively we have achieved unity between the white and Negro seamen. *If we maintain the unity we have achieved in this strike then we have the beginning of a real Maritime Federation.*

"Greater democracy has been secured by the membership of the International Seamen's Union which has replaced its former officials with elected, progressive leaders.

"The strike has encouraged hundreds, if not thousands of licensed officers to join the respective unions of their crafts.

"The campaign against the Copeland and Ship Subsidy Bills has been strengthened and has forced important concessions that are in our interests." (From resolution adopted at calling off strike.)

In the light of these gains, it is clear that if the maritime workers are successful in maintaining and consolidating their gains the strike will result in strengthening the unions and the unity of the various crafts, as well as an improvement in wages and working conditions for the workers in the East and Gulf, that is somewhat comparable to the results achieved on the Pacific Coast in 1934. Certainly, in view of these facts, there will be few marine workers that will agree with Norman Thomas' analysis that the East Coast strike was a "defeat".

GENERAL LESSONS OF THE STRIKE

In meeting this attack, in defeating it, and forcing important concessions from the employers, the maritime unions gave expression to the determination of the American workers to struggle against the growth of reaction in this country, and for that "better life" they were promised by Roosevelt and for which most of them voted. The steel and coal workers on the verge of a struggle, all the forces of progress in this country, will be stimulated by the outcome of the maritime strike as well as the auto strike, because they will see that victory is possible for them too.

The C.I.O. and all other progressive forces that are championing the cause of industrial unions of militant policies of trade union democracy are strengthened tremendously by the maritime struggle, which confirms the correctness of these progressive labor policies that are agitating the trade union movement, and indicate the tremendous possibilities that lie before

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labor through the application of these principles.

The determination of the marine workers to conduct such a long bitter struggle, and their ability to do so, must be partially explained by an understanding on their part of the character of the attack launched against them and the decisive influence that the outcome of their struggle would have upon the general labor movement in its struggle against reaction. Certainly, not only a tremendous strengthening of their organized power nationally, but also an *increased class consciousness* was reflected in the unity of the 40,000 members of the seven Pacific maritime unions who stood as one man and prevented a single ship from sailing from a Pacific port for over 100 days, and in the splendid solidarity of the seamen and licensed crafts in the East and Gulf who in twelve different ports began to walk off their ships with but one demand—*support the West coast!*

Of equal importance in indicating the realignment of forces that is taking place in America is the wide support given by the trade union movement and wide sections of the "public" and the unemployed to this historic struggle of the marine workers. This is to be seen most clearly on the Pacific Coast where the issues were more clear. Here, as a result of a splendidly organized campaign upon the part of the Pacific maritime unions, those sections of the population who were alarmed at the growth of reaction in this country and had voted against the Hearst-Landon-Knox ticket in the elections aligned themselves either openly, or at least adopted a neutral position, toward the maritime strikers. Not only did they show their sympathy with the maritime unions by financial support, but brought direct pressure on the government and shipowners, in behalf of the maritime unions, through the numerous resolutions adopted in protesting the strikebreaking speech of Mayor Rossi and in demanding the withholding of all ship subsidies pending settlement of the strike.

Perhaps in no other recent strike have such wide sections of the population been mobilized on the side of the strikers as was done on the Pacific Coast, and it was this wide support, together with the unshakeable unity of the strikers, that prevented the Pacific employers from utilizing terror and strikebreakers to smash the strike. Even on the East and Gulf coasts where issues were less clear, as a result of the attacks on the strike by the A. F. of L. leadership and some government officials, many prominent trade union officials spoke in support of the strike, and tens of thousands of dollars for strike relief was collected from the trade union movement and its sympathizers.

The strike confirmed the growth of progressive forces and tended to weld together wide sections of the people to assist the strikers in checking the shipowners' offensive. On the other hand, the strike emphasized the reactionary character of the A. F. of L. top craft leadership whose splitting policies and opposition to progressive measures are leading them into a more open united front with the Hearst, Liberty League and open-shop forces. We also see how Roosevelt's middle of the road policy plays into the hands of the reactionaries.

While the C.I.O. forces were plung-

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ing ahead with their campaign to organize steel and were actively leading the great auto strike, the A. F. of L. Convention, under the leadership of the Executive Council that suspended the C.I.O. unions from the A. F. of L., adopted a resolution condemning the action taken by the Eastern and Gulf maritime workers in support of the West Coast Unions. The I.S.U. top leadership, after the Eastern and Gulf membership, at official meetings, voted for strike action, walked out of the meeting and declared the strike illegal, and served, throughout the strike, as the main scab-herders for the shipowners. Joseph P. Ryan, President of I.L.A. if anything, did more to betray the strike even though he played a more clever game than the I.S.U. fakers. While in the beginning he covered up his role by pledging support to the West Coast I.L.A. longshoremen, he ended up by denouncing the Western longshoremen for supporting the other seafaring crafts, "fired" Harry Bridges, Pacific Coast District President of the I.L.A., organized gangsters to attack the East Coast pickets, and formed a united front with the major shipowners to conduct "strikes" against any shipping companies that signed agreements with the East and Gulf Coast strike seamen!

On the other hand, the C:I.O. forces, and their supporters in the craft unions, gave full support to the Pacific strike, and while the C.I.O. did not take an official stand on the strike in the East and Gulf, a number of leaders of the C.I.O. unions expressed their sympathy with the strike at public mass meetings. The C.I.O. unions in needle, rubber, and mining joined hands with the many craft union locals in giving substantial financial support to the strike.

The maritime strike constituted the first real test as to how Roosevelt would exercise the mandate given him in the recent elections by the American people, who were justly alarmed at the plans of reactionary finance capital to come into control of the government. At the best he tried to deal with the same forces which opposed him in the elections by "doing nothing" even though he had power to act on behalf of the strikers by publicly withholding subsidies and calling all loans to the shipowners—*which was demanded by hundreds of thousands of people!*

Madame Perkins joined in the chorus with the Ryans and Hunters in declaring the East Coast strike as "outlaw"; the Maritime Commission appointed by Roosevelt attempted unsuccessfully to align themselves with the shipowners. The failure on the part of the administration to postpone enforcement of the Copeland Bill in spite of the overwhelming mass protests of the maritime unions and the labor movement played into the hands of the shipowners. Roosevelt, confronted with a titanic struggle between the forces of reaction and progress, tried to secure "peace" by getting the marine unions to make concessions to the shipowners, and when he couldn't get away with this, kept quiet in hopes that somehow or other the issue would be settled without any positive action on his part.

Roosevelt's natural tendency was to compromise with the forces of reaction—and if he was prevented from doing so it was only because of the strong pressure independently exerted upon him by labor. These experiences,

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if properly understood by the marine workers and labor generally, constitute one of the most important lessons of the strike and prove the correctness of the line of our Party in the last elections. This policy was that while labor must at all costs defeat the reactionary Landon-Knox ticket it could not rely upon Roosevelt but could only force concessions from him by exerting pressure through organizing its political power independently. These experiences must serve to strengthen the movement for independent political action, for the development of a broad popular united front movement, to defeat the reactionaries in Congress, to secure the passage of progressive measures and for the building of a Farmer-Labor Party.

CORRECT POLICIES OF THE UNION MADE VICTORY POSSIBLE

The maritime unions were successful in registering these gains because, in the first place, the seven powerful Pacific Maritime Unions, united through the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, were able to mobilize a counter-offensive on a national scale. Notwithstanding the support of the general trade union movement and its sympathizers on the Pacific Coast, it is extremely doubtful if the maritime unions there would have been successful in beating back the offensive of the shipowners without the splendid support of the maritime unions in the East and Gulf.

While the extension of the struggle on a national scale was a major factor in determining the final outcome of the struggle, clarity on the objectives of the struggles was essential in determining the ability to conduct the strike to a satisfactory conclusion. While the strike was national in character, and had certain uniform aims, some of its main objectives differed according to the relationship of forces involved in the struggle. What were the chief objectives before this *national* struggle, which involved the members of *all* Pacific Coast unions, and the membership of the six of the Eastern and Gulf unions? They are as follows:

(a) To defeat the attacks of the shipowners against the Pacific Maritime Unions and to maintain the Maritime Federation.

(b) To force the shipowners to conclude an agreement with the Pacific Maritime Unions that would meet the basic demands for which the workers struck.

(c) To advance the movement of the Eastern and Gulf marine workers toward uniform, national wages and working conditions, and to strengthen their unions, cement their unity nationally and among the various crafts, and to advance the movement for a national Maritime Federation.

(d) To strengthen and advance, especially in the latter phases of the strike, the struggle against the reactionary Copeland and ship subsidy bills, which were enforced by the Roosevelt administration in spite of the protests of the maritime unions, and the fact that enforcement of the bills in the midst of the strike helped the shipowners in their effort to defeat the strike.

It was the clear understanding achieved as to the character and objectives of a struggle that involved workers on a national scale that enabled the workers to conduct their fight on a

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correct general policy and to formulate decisions on other basic questions that arose during the course of the struggle. This article cannot pretend to be a detailed analysis of the tactics pursued, especially on the Pacific Coast (although such an analysis of all the events on the Pacific Coast no doubt will be made, since their experiences are of great importance to our Party and the labor movement), but a few of the more general questions must be dealt with here:

First, although we can but mention it in passing, the tactics pursued by the West Coast unions prior to the strike that prevented the shipowners from doing what the auto barons did—force a struggle at a time and on an issue determined by the employers. Here the unions, recognizing that the shipowners were organized and wanted to provoke a struggle, pursued a policy aimed at: (1) Trying to force a settlement without a struggle if this were possible; (2) Avoiding entering a struggle at a time and under conditions dictated by the shipowners; (3) While exhausting all possibilities for a peaceful settlement, at the same time endeavoring to isolate the shipowners, and to strengthen the position of the unions so that if a struggle were forced upon them they would be able to enter it with the strongest possible position. The serious approach to the situation that was reflected in this policy showed, among other things, that the leadership of the maritime unions and our Party as well were responsible for the practical mass leaders who did not play around with loose talk of "militant" action, but enabled the workers to use their strength to the best possible advantage.

Second, to maintain the unity of all the unions involved in the strike on the Pacific Coast, which was successfully accomplished. The importance of maintaining unity at all costs was understood right from the beginning, especially by the longshoremen, who re-opened their agreement, which generally speaking was satisfactory, in order to be in a position to support the demands of the I.S.U. unions and liscensed officers.

The unity of the strike was seriously endangered only three times, to wit: on the question of whether a strike vote should be taken prior to the strike; on the question of whether the tentative agreements negotiated by Lundberg, of the S.U.P. and Ferguson, and Cook of the Firemen's Union should be voted upon before the other unions had reached an agreement; and, finally, as to the policy to be pursued against the Copeland Bill. It is significant to note that policies which threatened the unity of the strikers originated from sources close to the Trotskyites; and were rejected by the workers who supported those policies proposed by the progressives, headed by Harry Bridges, and that these policies met with the full endorsement of the Communist Party. Not only were these splitting policies defeated, but the struggle against them was conducted in such a manner that the Trotskyites, who were mainly responsible for them, became exposed in the eyes of large sections of the trade unionists who were beginning to recognize that the Trotskyite agents of reaction are a far greater menace at this time to the union than the attacks of the Hearst press, or of the discredited Scharrenbergs and Ryans.

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Third, to maintain the unity of the strikers nationally, on the basis of a correct policy. The most serious threat to the national unity of the strike developed in connection with the open, strikebreaking activities of the I.S.U. top leadership. The creation of a new union and the breaking away from the American Federation of Labor was advanced at a most critical period, as the only means to defeat the strikebreakers. This policy originated in the I.W.W., and from certain forces in the Sailors' Union of the Pacific who up until then had concealed their splitting policies by pretending to fight for the return of the charter of the S.U.P. which had been revoked by the reactionary top leadership. These forces were either directly lined up with, or influenced by, the Trotskyites. For a time they attracted some support from honest militants, who were disgusted by the strikebreaking activities of the I.S.U. officialdom. But the confusion was liquidated, and unity maintained through the action of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the I.S.U. in removing their former officials and in electing new officials. These decisions, which were possible only because of the strike, showed the support of the overwhelming majority of the membership of the I.S.U. leadership, enabled the membership to "take control of their union" and to restore democracy. These decisions enabled the rank and file to further advance their long bitter struggle for democracy—a struggle which has been conducted successfully in spite of the great difficulties.

The fight from then on became one of how to maintain and strengthen the I.S.U. which the membership had gained control of, and exposed those who continued to talk about "new unions" as people whose talk about "new unions" and "fighting the fakers" merely covered up their splitting policies and sabotage of the decisions of the majority of the seamen. In this connection one of the most important lessons to be drawn from this experience for the trade union movement generally is that the policies to be adopted by the workers in their fight for democracy and for trade union unity are not determined by the rules dictated by the reactionary bureaucrats, but by the support any policy can secure from the *majority* of the workers. When an action is supported by the majority of the workers, it is criminal to refrain from taking such action because it meets with the disapproval of the reactionary officials who neither represent nor have the support of the mass of the workers.

Fourth, to bring the strike in the East and Gulf to a successful conclusion. The inability to maintain the original effectiveness of the strike in these districts and extend it to the longshoremen, due mainly to the strikebreaking activities of the former I.S.U. officials, and Joseph P. Ryan of the I.L.A., made this a very difficult question. The growing weaknesses of the strike in these districts at the time the hearings of the National Labor Relations Board were forced made it clear that the Eastern and Gulf strikers could best maintain their gains and press for additional ones by terminating their strike and prosecuting the fight on issues still unsettled through the hearings of the N.L.R.B., backed up by their organized power on the ships.

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The question then arose — how would termination of the strike on this basis prior to a settlement of the strike on the Pacific affect the position of the West Coast unions, whose support was the main objective of the Eastern and Gulf strikes? The answer to this question was that the West Coast could best be supported, not by attempting to continue at all costs the Eastern strike after it had reached its peak and was declining, but by maintaining the organization and strength that had been achieved as a result of the strike. To have continued the strike under these circumstances would have jeopardized the gains made, and weakened the national organized strength of the workers and possibilities of a settlement on the Coast. Even though the economic effectiveness of the strike was no longer so great, the increased organized national strength remained as a club over the heads of the shipowners, and this had to be maintained above everything else.

On this basis the decision was made to terminate the strike in the Eastern and Gulf Districts, and the final settlement of the West Coast a short time after, as well as the announcement of the wage increases in the East and other events, fully show that this decision was correct.

Finally, there was the question of the Copeland Bill and especially the Permanent Discharge Book, better known as the fink book. The maritime unions had conducted a long campaign against these reactionary bills, which had been strengthened by the strike, and forced a considerable retreat upon the part of the government, and brought their opposition to these bills before Congress. Nevertheless, while they had scored considerable victories and created a most favorable situation for continuing the fight, they had not completely prevented the government from putting these bills into effect. The question then arose of how to continue most effectively the struggle to defeat the reactionary sections of these bills. Such "militants" as Lundberg and Ferguson advocated the continuing of the strike until complete repeal of these bills was secured. Such a policy was wrong for two reasons: First, this was a national issue, but at the same time the strike was no longer effective nationally, and the possibilities for continuing the strike on a national scale at that time did not exist. Second, while the trade union movement, especially on the Pacific Coast, thoroughly understood the original involved in the struggle and were prepared to support it, they were not so clear and thoroughly mobilized in regard to the Copeland Bill.

To have continued the strike on the issue of "defeat the fink book" would have cost much of the former support of the trade union movement, which was of tremendous importance, and could not have been backed up on similar action in the East and Gulf. The mass of workers rejected this policy as disastrous and voted to press forward in their fight against the Copeland Bill by insisting that no one be forced to accept a permanent discharge book as a condition of securing a job; by intensifying their campaign to force Congress to act on the Sirovitch resolution, which calls for postponement of the enforcement of the Copeland Bill for six months; and to consider their proposed amendments; and to back up their whole campaign by

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strengthening their position on the ships and securing wider support from trade unions and progressive organizations.

This program, where applied in an organized manner since the conclusion of the strike, has prevented the government from forcing the seamen to accept the books; has resulted in the announcement that issuance of the books and certificates of efficiency has been postponed for a month or more, and has mobilized increased pressure upon Congress and the administration which, if followed up, can force a complete defeat of this reactionary anti-labor legislation.

Meeting such difficult and complicated problems as were encountered in this strike and solving them is a real tribute to the abilities and devotion of the leadership of the struggle. The strike showed that the Frisco longshoreman Harry Bridges, who from a working longshoreman and rank-and-file striker became the leader of the 1934 strike, is a brilliant, courageous leader of the maritime workers nationally, and one of the outstanding leaders of the American trade union movement. Out of the ranks of the East Coast seamen has come Joe Curran, a militant but inexperienced fighter ten months ago, seasoned by two historic strikes into an established, capable leader. Jack Lawrenson, Jerry King and Al Lannon in the East Coast; Henry Schmidt and Walter Stack on the West Coast are but a few of the dozens of new progressive forces, splendid militant leaders, whose standing as progressives and leaders has become more firmly established in the course of this historic struggle. Out of the struggle of the marine workers has come forward a corps of honest, militant, rank-and-file progressive leaders, growing in experience, well deserving of the confidence they command from the rank and file, who constitute one of the main guarantees that the reactionary bureaucrats leadership of the I.L.A. and I.S.U. whose position already is shaky will soon be where they belong, outside the ranks of organized labor.

ROLE OF THE PARTY

The inability of the shipowners and their agents to split the ranks of the workers with the Red scare is not only an indication of the increased strength and influence of our Party and improvement in our methods of work but also shows the growing political consciousness of the workers.

In every port the leadership elected by the strikers included Communists. In some of the ports well-known Communists became outstanding leaders of the strike. On practically every basic question of policy the recommendations of the Communists received the support of the overwhelming mass of the workers. The *Daily Worker* and the *Western Worker,* which were systematically distributed throughout the strike, were welcomed by thousands. Motions made by the reactionaries in the Firemens and Cooks Union on the Pacific Coast against the Communist press were overwhelmingly defeated.

The best indication of the role of the Party is to be seen in the recruiting. A complete report on a national scale of recruiting during the course of the strike is not yet available, but substantial results were achieved in all ports. The recruiting of some of the most important ports follows: San Fran-

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cisco, slightly over 200; New York, 250; Seattle came out of the strike with a total membership of 153. These included some of the best forces among the strikers, who during the course of the strike advanced well along the road to becoming mass leaders. So many new forces were recruited and developed during the course of the strike that it became possible and necessary in some districts to organize, at the end of the strike, special training schools. In New York, for instance, twenty-five of the best seamen recruited during the strike are attending a three-week school organized by the district.

With the strength we now have in marine, with the army of forces that are developing, with the increased influence and prestige of our Party, it is now possible to accomplish much more than we have in the past. Further, if in this generally favorable situation we are still weak in some ports or unions, it is only because in these places we have not learned how to take advantage of the situation by improving our methods of work, by proper organization of our forces, and by inadequate attention from leading committees.

PRESENT TASKS BEFORE WORKERS

The results of the strike are to be measured not only in those things already won by the strikers, but also in the favorable situation that now exists for consolidating their gains by strengthening their unions, and advancing the struggle for democracy, for unity, and for a National Maritime Federation. Never have the martime workers had such an excellent perspective. But in order to secure their gains and to strengthen their forces the marine workers have a big job ahead with many difficulties to overcome. Unless they are able to take advantage of the situation they will suffer setbacks. They must recognize that the conclusion of the strike does not mark the end of the shipowners' offensive. They should seriously ponder over the statement appearing in the Kiplinger letter, which says:

> "There will be peace on the Pacific Coast shortly—*but it will not be a permanent peace.*"

The tasks that confront the maritime unions at the outcome of the strike are:

First, to understand that the success of the maritime unions was due mainly because of their increased strength and unity on a national scale. To maintain their victories and continue to march forward they must secure even greater strength and unity through supporting progressive national policies that will unite and strengthen the unions in all districts.

Second, the question of consolidating the position of the Eastern I.S.U. unions is the major task of all forces nationally. The decisions made by the membership in these Districts restoring democracy in the unions, and the officials elected by them, and their stand that they will accept the proposed A. F. of L. investigations if they are guaranteed that they will be honestly conducted can and must be realized as the first important step toward reuniting the forces of the seamen on a national scale. Re-establishing national unity in a situation where the Sailors Union of the Pacific has been expelled by the International officials, who also refuse to recognize the decisions of the membership in the

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three unions composing the Eastern Districts, is one of the important tasks before the seamen in the coming months.

The third important task is to consolidate the unity achieved in the strike and to advance further the movement for a National Maritime Federation. Here there must be clarity and the workers must guard against wrong tendencies, such as are reflected by some forces in the Gulf Federation, which was launched prematurely without any real mass base. These forces, lacking the support of some of the various craft unions because of the weakened position of the progressive movement, tend to convert the federation from an organization of affiliated unions into a "new industrial union" on an individual membership basis.

The lessons of the strike, as well as the experiences in the formation of the Pacific Federation, show that the march toward industrial forms of organization in the marine industry means first of all the strengthening of the individual craft unions and the advancement of the fight for democracy and progressive policies in these unions. By following this path, and by strengthening the Joint Marine Councils which were formed in the Eastern ports at the end of the strike, the workers will soon be able to achieve a National Maritime Federation. As to those critics, especially the Wobblies and some forces in the S.U.P., who argue that a federation of affiliated unions is a "reactionary and bastard form of unionism", we answer—*advancing the federation movement nationally is the main task in advancing the struggle for industrial unionism in the marine industry.*

By winning the support of the craft union membership on a national scale, and by advancing the struggle for progressive unionism in each craft union, the membership will soon see that the benefits they get as a result of the cooperation achieved through the federation will be increased and their organized power strengthened by amalgamating all their forces into one powerful, compact industrial union. This is the real path toward industrial unionism—and the idle talk about "real industrial unions" is but spittoon philosophizing of sectarians and a confession of bankruptcy.

Fourth, to mobilize all progressive forces in every union on a national scale to support the fight of the I.L.A. membership for democracy in their union and against the number one strike-breaker, Joseph P. Ryan and his reactionary policies.

The failure to involve the East and Gulf longshoremen prevented the seamen and other crafts from securing a more favorable settlement. Failure in the future to achieve united action with the longshoremen will have even more serious consequences.

Fifth, to intensify the fight against the Copeland Bill by creating stronger organization on the ships and mobilizing great support from the trade union movement to force Congress to act upon the Sirovitch Resolution, which calls for postponing enforcement of the Bill for six months, and to force consideration and favorable action upon the amendments to these bills submitted by the union.

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THE RUBBER FRONT IN AKRON

BY JAMES KELLER

IN DEALING with the questions of the rubber unions and our work there, it will be necessary for me, in the course of this report, to touch somewhat on other phases of our work in Akron and on the position of our Party as a whole. The year 1936 was the biggest year in rubber production since the days of 1929, and the indications are that there will be a still larger output in 1937. But the basic feature in the industry in 1936 was the great union organization drive.

The other day, a member of the Goodyear local went down to North Carolina and went to the waterfront wearing his union button. The striking marine workers insisted on taking his button of the U.R.W.A. away from him. They said, "You boys in Goodyear started the ball rolling, and we want to keep your button here."

THE ORGANIZATION PUSH

The victory over the large Goodyear corporation in March, 1936, had, of course, important effects on labor struggles nationally. We are not ready to say that it was Goodyear which started the ball rolling. But we can say that the Goodyear strike was the big push which organized the rubber industry. As a direct result of the Goodyear strike, the International union was able at its 1936 convention, to register a growth of over 800 per cent. Still more important, the "big three" in Akron—the Firestone, Goodrich and Goodyear plants—are, on the average, over 85 per cent organized. Many of the smaller plants are now organized 100 per cent.

The rubber industry nationally is still far from being 100 per cent organized. The unions are still weak in such important places as California, Michigan, and the eastern states, although organization work in these places is making progress and numerous struggles have been carried on. One fact stands out, however. The Akron district, center of the world's rubber industry, has been organized. This fact has had very serious consequences and confronted the Party with many new problems. This fact has also had serious effect upon the policies of the union leadership.

It must be remembered that the sit-down struggles which began in January, 1936, in the rubber industry and the Goodyear strike itself resulted from spontaneous action taken by the rubber workers. The slogan of the International leadership and the local officials was: "Organize first, then negotiate, and then strike if necessary". When the Goodyear strike

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started there was hesitance on the part of the union leadership to authorize the strike and a good deal of vacillation with regard to the conduct of the strike.

The Goodyear strike aroused the militancy of the workers and was followed by a wave of sit-down strikes and gains by the workers. But this strike on the other hand caused a great deal of anxiety to the leadership of the International.

Soon after the Goodyear strike the efforts of the International leadership, and especially of the leadership of the Goodyear local where strikes were most frequent, were directed towards pacifying the workers. The policy of the Party during this period was to organize and direct this militancy of the workers towards larger gains and eventual recognition of the International union by the rubber companies. But the International leadership took a different course. Their policy was (1) immediately to put a stop to sit-down strikes; (2) to show the companies that the U.R.W.A. is a disciplined and "responsible" organization; (3) on the basis of these two conditions to win the good will of the companies and eventually to get a round-table settlement of major questions and obtain recognition this way.

A resolution on sit-down strikes was introduced at the last rubber convention, which our Party endorsed because it coincided with the policies of the Party. This placed the blame for labor disturbances upon the vicious policies of the companies, and warned against spontaneous, unauthorized sit-down strikes. At the same time it provided for the effective use of these struggles, in an organized way, to improve conditions and promote the growth of the union. This resolution was defeated at the convention by a vote of 35 to 27, but present developments show that this resolution is becoming a guiding force for the policies of the union.

PRESENT PROBLEMS

At the present time there is a changing line of policy on the part of the union leadership in the rubber industry. It is moving definitely closer to the line of policy which has been patiently advanced by the Party since the Goodyear strike.

How did this change come about? We know that the rubber companies have in the past used the weak and defensive line of the union leadership. They delayed settlement of minor grievances in an effort to cause conflicts between the union leadership and the rank and file. They transferred company-union men into departments which were nearly 100 per cent organized for the purpose of creating friction. They launched intensive attacks against the rubber unions, raising the threat of decentralization, and creating a fascist Greater Akron Civic Association which unloosed a continuous barrage of propaganda against the unions, through the press and radio.

The unions, on the other hand, considered it inadvisable until recently to counteract this vicious barrage of the rubber barons and their agents. They directed their main efforts towards pacifying the workers, hoping thereby to pacify the employers and win their recognition.

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This policy was most strikingly expressed in the leadership of the Goodyear local which, as you know, was the main object of attack by the anti-union forces. The Goodyear local leadership was among the most conservative, expounding an open policy of class collaboration, talking about "saving the goose which lays the golden egg" and directing its main fire against the most militant workers involved in sit-down struggles.

It is very significant, therefore, that recently a definite change has appeared in the outlook and the line of action of the Goodyear leadership.

On December 24, in an article published in *Local 2 News* John House, the union president, made a reply to the attack of the Greater Akron Association in which he mildly placed the blame on the company. This article, though inadequate, was definitely a step towards the line of the resolution on sit-downs. But in this same article, House still had a very dangerous position. I quote this part of the article:

"The vast majority of those who are members of the U.R.W.A. have only one fault. They are too charitable in their attitude toward persistent offenders. They need only to stand up and give active and vocal support to the principles and policies of the Union refusing to go along with those who are incapable of self-discipline and refuse to allow their minds to be poisoned and their judgment warped by listening to the propaganda put out by the enemies of the Union disparaging and attacking the character of officers and members of the Union. I think we should do just that, in spite of all the agitation the 'stoolies' and others stir up. As for the Greater Akron Association, I would say it would have plenty to do cleaning up its own back yards."

This quotation and the whole article conveyed the idea which was the practice of the Goodyear leadership in the past. "We shall clean out our back yard, so you can deal with us as responsible people." The step forward was the mild request to the companies that they begin thinking about cleaning some of their back yards. But still the main stress was laid against certain sections of the union.

As a matter of fact in both the Goodyear and the Firestone locals the officials tried to impose harsh disciplinary measures against leaders involved in sit-downs, and even against certain outstanding leaders who had nothing to do with sit-downs but who were under fire by the company. It seems that the leadership thought it necessary to make concessions to the company by attacking and trying to eliminate such people.

Despite all such "good-will" gestures on the part of House and others, the company only took advantage of such opportunities to increase its attacks against the union. The company followed one consistent line all the time: "There is not room enough for both the Goodyear Company and the union in Akron." And the Goodyear local officials, it seems, are beginning to realize this.

A few days ago a so-called "New Year's message" appeared in the name of Paul Litchfield, the president of the Goodyear Company. This message violently attacked the union, declared that decentralization was not a threat but a living reality and spoke of lay-offs of thousands from the Goodyear plants in Akron.

To this message, John House replied on January 7. It is important to quote some of this reply. Explaining the Goodyear strike House states:

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"This came about simply as a spontaneous rebellion and as a result of an accumulation of grievances which had been created through the failure of the management to deal fairly with the representatives of the employees. . . . The strike is history and we should have it so. The only reason for this reference to what transpired during the period covered above is to show you people who may have forgotten that it is not the union that is to blame for the present situation but that it comes about as a result of the failure of the management to recognize and deal fairly with the representatives of the workers in a spirit of cooperation rather than from a sense of expediency. . . .

"If these people really want to help Akron obtain and keep industrial peace and harmony, let them quit trying to intimidate the workers with their scare-head advertising. Let them probe deeper into the problem to see what really is the cause of so much unrest and then do something toward correcting the conditions which allow for this sort of thing toward the elimination of the causes of industrial strife."

This article is extremely significant in comparison with the one previously written by Mr. House. It omits any sort of threat against any section of the union membership and it lays the blame squarely upon the company and its union-busting organizations. Secondly, this article is primarily an answer to the threat of decentralization, and shows no tendency to capitulate to this threat. We know, of course, that any line towards capitulation in the face of the decentralization threat, any tendency to soft-pedal aggressive union action, would destroy the unions. Furthermore, it would not stop but would encourage decentralization as a matter of future policy by the companies. Such statements alone, however, are not sufficient to meet the present situation. What should be the proper line of action for the unions and for our Party forces?

DRIVE FOR AGREEMENT

Some of the locals are already beginning to provide the answer, which in large measure is the result of the persistent action followed by the Party at the last rubber convention and in recent months. Some locals, for example, are drafting agreements which they propose to place before the companies. The leaders of these locals are tired of handling thousands of grievances in a disorganized fashion which is very much to the liking of the management. These locals are preparing to settle a good many of these grievances through an agreement covering major points, providing definite machinery for the speedy settlement of grievances—*and aiming at the recognition of the union.* This is the line of action, which should become the line of action for the entire Akron district of the U.R.W.A. and for our Party forces.

It is interesting to note that the demands which are now being considered by the rubber unions have been advanced for some time by the progressive forces. The fact that the unions are taking up such policies now is not only indicative of the forward movement of the unions, but is at the same time a vindication of the course of action advocated by the progressives.

What are the issues now confronting the rubber workers? They are:

1. Recognition of the union.
2. Elimination of company unions.
3. Raising of wages in the lower brackets and setting a minimum of 75 cents per hour.
4. A sweeping adjustment of accumulated grievances and provisions for

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speedy adjustment of future grievances.

5. Embodying these points in an agreement.

6. Putting an end to attacks on the unions, now practiced by the companies, through threats of decentralization and through the activities of Akron Civic Association, the Stahl-Mate Club and similar organizations.

We should also consider the influence of certain demands which have been raised by the automobile union and which find a warm response among the rubber workers. Among these are reduction of speed-up and the abolition of piece-work.

As steps for action along these lines, I believe it is necessary to draw up carefully a program of demands or an agreement which the International could present to the rubber companies. There is no doubt but that conditions are favorable for an aggressive fight for such demands. There is no doubt also that such action by the International would meet with wholehearted and militant support by the rubber workers and would help organize the entire rubber industry.

It is important to consider those methods which should be used by the union in presenting the agreement. The terms of the agreement should be thoroughly discussed by the membership of the local unions. Such discussions in local union meetings should be preceded by conferences of shop committeemen where preliminary discussions on the agreement will take place. Local union meetings at which the agreement would be discussed can be used to have a real turn-out of the membership. In order to do this it would be necessary to publicize and announce in advance that, at a specific meeting of the local, the agreement would come up for discussion. Something of this kind has been done by the Goodyear local in connection with seniority questions. Such a meeting was held in the city armory and shows that any serious question, if announced in advance, will result in a heavy turn-out on the part of the union membership.

It would, of course, be a mistake to try and keep the intentions of the unions and the International secret. On the contrary, the Akron district of the rubber workers and International itself would achieve the best results if they openly proclaimed their intention of seeking genuine collective bargaining with the companies on all outstanding issues. Every effort should therefore be made to inform and enlighten the public and to win public sentiment and support behind the justified objectives and demands of the rubber workers. After such preliminary steps, the ground would be well prepared for the International to approach the rubber companies on the question of collective bargaining and the drawing up of an agreement.

RUBBER AND THE AUTO STRIKE

We have seen from what has been said here that there is considerable difference in the situation in rubber from that in auto and steel. This difference arises mainly from the fact that the rubber unions went through their major organizational struggles and growth in 1936, whereas the auto and steel unions are now in various stages of such organization. This is an important factor which must be borne in mind. At the same time, however,

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we must see the close connection between the movements in auto and steel with the movement among the rubber workers. Especially between auto and rubber is there not only a close productive connection but actual living interest between the two groups of workers.

We must develop the greatest possible support for the organizing drives of the auto workers in the rubber unions. In due time, if needed, finances will have to be raised in support of the automobile workers. The ground for all this should be prepared through the rubber workers' press, through speeches on the automobile situation at local meetings, through mass meetings in Akron and other rubber centers, where representatives of the auto unions would speak, and similar activities.

The nation-wide developments in auto are having important effects upon the rubber unions and the leadership of the U.R.W.A. The whole C.I.O. movement has been tremendously stimulating to the rubber workers. Organizers and leaders of rubber unions are coming in contract with other figures and sections of the labor movement. Time and again these people come into contact with our Party with the result, of course, that they receive whole-hearted cooperation and support. The result is a continuous broadening of outlook and deeper understanding of labor problems by these people. Last but not least, there is a growing respect for the Communist Party and a very rapid exploding of the "Red menace" and the prejudices which capitalist influences have erected against the Communist movement.

These prejudices, of course, still exist in the minds of a good many leaders and a section of the rubber union membership. But, the unions are rapidly moving forward on the path of class struggle. During recent weeks we have seen two events which indicate the forward movement of the trade unions in Akron. One of these was the campaign developed by the local trade union movement in support of the maritime strike. The other was the reception for the youth delegation representing the People's Front government of Spain.

In support of marine, the Goodrich local went on record supporting the maritime strike, voted $500 out of its treasury and decided to raise $2,000 more through shop collections; $50 was voted by the Goodyear local, $100 by the Firestone, $25 by Barberton C.L.U. Over $800 was raised.

Still more significant, however, is the fact that the International, with the help of Sherman Dalrymple, its president, arranged a mass meeting for Joe Curran which was held January 3. At this meeting a number of labor leaders were present, including Brother House of the Goodyear local.

Although the attendance was small, Mr. Dalrymple and others seemed to realize more and more as the meeting went on its full significance. It was indeed the first act of this kind by the rubber unions in solidarity with another important section of labor. The results were greatly instructive to all who attended. Towards the end, Mr. Dalrymple, who acted as chairman, asked everyone to constitute himself a committee of one to collect funds for the maritime strike. He was followed by Brother L. L. Callahan, president

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of the Goodrich local, who appealed to his committeemen to see to it that every union man in the shop donated at least 25 cents each to the maritime strikers. When Brother Callahan finished, a rubber worker got up in the audience and addressing Brother John House requested him to instruct his union members in the same way that Brother Callahan had just done.

While Brother Curran spoke, the rubber workers lived through the marine struggle and compared it to their own. When Curran told them of the longshoremen carrying their "hooks" they remarked to each other, "that's like the tomahawk (a tool used in the rubber shops)—a dangerous weapon," etc.

In the reception for the Spanish youth delegation, a still broader committee was organized than was the case in the meeting for Curran. The present committee includes President Dalrymple and another member of the International Executive Board of the U.R.W., presidents of the Akron and Barberton C.L.U.'s, president of the Goodrich local, professors, attorneys and two ministers. Committees have been on the job in a number of unions, distributing leaflets, posters, and announcing the meeting.

The vote in the last election demonstrated that the membership of the rubber unions held uppermost in their minds the fact that their union had grown, had secured better working conditions and had made other definite gains. The membership showed that they were not ready or willing to make any changes in leadership at this time. They did not go into the consideration of various issues which had developed during the Goodyear strike and on other occasions. They voted on the basis of results. Both in the International convention last September and still more so in the local union elections this was the predominant feature.

It is, of course, an undeniable fact that there was justification for considerable criticism of the strike leadership during the Goodyear strike. There were other situations in which the International leadership as well as the leadership of some locals hesitated and even made serious mistakes. These mistakes, however, did not justify a full slate in opposition to the present leadership. As a matter of fact there was no candidate running against President L. L. Callahan of the Goodrich local but there were contesting candidates for every major office in the Firestone and the Goodyear locals. Such complete slates had the effect of drawing a line of division within the locals and reflected unfavorably on some of the candidates who should have been and possibly would have been elected for minor positions.

It is possible on the basis of friendly criticism to influence the course of the present leadership of the International in the proper direction. There is every possibility for constructive work within the rubber unions on the part of every tendency. For this reason it is necessary to eliminate any sort of opposition movement within the rubber unions.

The method of slates, therefore, has definitely proven to be undesirable. There is no obstacle to anyone in the rubber unions obtaining recognition from his fellow members providing he aggressively voices a correct line of

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policy, advances constructive proposals and proves himself to be a sincere worker for the union. It is on this basis that the more far-sighted elements in the union should expect to receive recognition. This method, moreover, will avoid any sort of feeling of special groups and group divisions in the organization which is created by such methods as slates.

On the whole the mistakes committed have not gone so deep as to create any serious problems. The feeling of friction created by the slates is being eliminated. This is assisted by the fact that the rubber unions are moving more and more along the lines of policy which has been put forward by the most conscious elements in these unions. The outlook for the future development and growth of the unions therefore appears bright.

Our main tasks are twofold. First, to facilitate and advance as rapidly as possible the forward movement in the rubber unions. Second, to build the Party in Akron, and particularly in the rubber unions as one of the chief guarantees that such a forward movement will continue.

BUILDING THE PARTY

How do matters stand with our Party organization in Akron? About one-third of our membership is made up of rubber workers. As compared with last year, the figures, which have only increased by 20 or so, do not show the actual qualitative change in membership which has taken place in our section. Last year our branches were recovering from the change which occurred from the shift of our main activities to the trade union field. A good many unstable elements who were never secure in the Party and some of whom did not know whether they had joined the Party or the unemployed council have dropped out. Their places have been taken by a new and a much more stable membership with mass connections, which increases the influence of the Party manyfold.

We have now a new shop branch. built up in the Goodyear strike and we have registered in this unit all the decisive elements who had joined during the Goodyear strike. We have a much better trade union composition in the section, including some good recruits from other trades beside rubber. We have recruited some from among the intellectuals and these comrades are now conducting a Marxist study circle among a group of some twelve to fifteen intellectuals who carry considerable influence in the community. We have also had some good recruits from among the W.P.A.

As you see, the relative weight of our Party organization, its composition and influence, is far improved as compared with last year.

But it is necessary to say that our gains are still negligible in comparison with the possibilities and requirements of the situation. We are still confronting the outstanding and immediate problem—that of building a mass party in Akron, and first of all a mass party in rubber.

The question is, what shall we do further to correct our past slow pace in the building of the Party?

We have begun to issue a printed shop bulletin which has had excellent response in the plants. We have to establish this bulletin on such a stable

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foundation that it will come out on the dot each month and will be so alive that its influence will continuously expand. We have begun to collect names of union members and officials for the purpose of mailing this bulletin. If, in addition to shop distributions, we succeed in regularly mailing such a bulletin to several hundred men each month, this bulletin will become a force in the rubber locals.

Above all we need the application of such methods as we use in making our general trade union contacts. When, for example, we want to initiate some measure in the trade unions, we visit certain people, we work with them, we educate them and advise them. They come to depend upon us and to seek our opinions and advice. What we need in every branch in the rubber shops is a core of comrades who would have around themselves in different fields of activity a number of trade unionists that they could activize, guide and advise, that they could systematically supply with literature and take to important meetings. Such work even extends to social activities, joint dinners, friendship among the wives of such people, etc. It is such work, conducted systematically, that we have been weak in, and which is vital for the growth of the Party.

We come up here against a very acute difficulty, the political development of our comrades. In order to play such a role, our comrades have to read, our comrades have to receive political education or else they cannot play such a leading role. At all costs, if we are to make any advances, we have to begin serious educational activity in the section.

We are experiencing many difficulties and have many shortcomings. But we are meeting with increasing successes and we know that our difficulties are difficulties of growth. One of the chief remedies for the solution of our problems is to take seriously the line of the last Central Committee plenum for building the Party. This we intend to tackle seriously.

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PARTY MOBILIZATION IN OHIO

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE last Central Committee meeting of our Party emphasized that we "see in the overwhelming defeat of reaction in the elections a great opportunity for the forces of the People's Front to move forward, for labor to achieve some of its demands, for all of the oppressed to win improvements in their situation.... There is a mounting mood of confidence and readiness to struggle. This is the mood that must be roused, stimulated and organized to drive the whole movement forward for the People's Front."

All this has been verified by the great activity of the masses, first of all in the heroic auto strike, but also in the organizing campaigns in steel, the increased legislative activities of the trade unions and the growing spirit of unity of all progressive-minded people against reaction, wherever it raises its head.

A "C.I.O." STATE

What do we find in Ohio—one of the large and decisive industrial states—where our Party line must express itself in life if the entire Party is successfully to move forward on a nationwide scale? A state where steel, auto, rubber, mining and electrical appliance industries predominate can be characterized as a "C.I.O. state". Successful organizing work has been conducted in the auto, steel and electrical appliance industries and gradually stronger and more mature unions are evolving. Aggressive struggles stimulating this organizing work have taken place in the auto industry particularly. A growing consciousness is evident, especially in rubber, of the need for a broader outlook than merely their own industry and successful beginnings have been made in solidarity actions with other unions, as the rubber union support to the marine strikers; trade union support to the struggle for Spanish democracy, etc.

There is still evident, however, an underestimation of united action on the political field, behind important political issues of concern also to the trade unions. This is a reflection of the slow development of these militant workers and their organizations in drawing the class conclusions from their successful economic struggles, and the weight of the old practices and political ideology of even the C.I.O. unions, whose first impulse is to depend upon some other political force, rather than take the initiative and solve their own problems, relying upon their own organized force and that of the common people generally.

Participating ever more actively in these mass struggles and unionization

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drive is the Communist Party—helping to determine the outcome of events through the work of its members but still very inadequately drawing the complete class conclusions for all the toiling population from these great struggles, because of inadequate independent work and woeful weaknesses in building the Party and Young Communist League.

Such a situation endangers the whole future development of these struggles, especially the big battles now maturing in steel, and the need for aggressive independent farmer-labor political action in the coming elections. Only a parallel strengthening of the open political influence of the Communist Party, its organizational growth and theoretical development of the Communist Party members, with that of the labor movement generally, will make victory more assured.

ECONOMIC ROYALISTS ATTACK

Today we are in a new stage of struggle as far as the organizing of the mass production industries and the general struggle against reaction are concerned. In line with the policies nationally of the economic royalists, the vice-president of the Republic Steel Corporation at the recent Cleveland Chamber of Commerce banquet declared "from now on we are going to get tough with these C.I.O. organizers", and immediately two S.W.O.C. organizers in Cleveland and two in Warren were beaten up by company police. This has been followed by "trial" firings of active S.W.O.C. volunteer organizers in the mills.

In the auto industry, General Motors, becoming alarmed at the growth of the United Automobile Workers of America, deliberately tried to provoke the union into premature action, hoping in this way to break the growing influence of the C.I.O. among the auto workers. That is the explanation of their provocative work in the Fisher Body Cleveland plant on December 28, which started the national automobile strike.

VICTORY IN AUTO

The victory of the auto strike against General Motors is not only of significance to the auto industry, where for the first time the heart of the industry —Michigan—is being successfully penetrated and the giant of the industry—General Motors—has been forced to sign on the dotted line. Of equal importance is its immediate effect upon steel. Steel workers who had been joining the S.W.O.C. in ever larger numbers immediately after elections began to hesitate during the General Motors strike, awaiting the outcome. With the news of the settlement, there was not only a rush on the part of a minority of auto workers still outside of the union to "get on the inside", but immediately, recruiting in steel was speeded up. One of the central tasks of every progressive, every Communist, is to emphasize the importance of and give their best efforts to a speeding up of the tempo of the steel drive, in order to take full advantage of this victory of the auto workers.

Party statements have already made clear the character and significance of the victory of the automobile workers. In contrast with past strikes in the Fisher Body plant in Cleveland, for instance, this strike was victorious because:

1. The workers in some twenty

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plants—and especially in the key body plants in Cleveland and Flint—stuck together and maintained a solid front;

2. The strike was conducted in a democratic manner, involving the maximum of active strikers in its conduct; establishing a broad strike apparatus, including daily shop stewards' meetings;

3. Absolute unity of the ranks grew out of this democratic conduct of the strike, with the bosses' "Red scare" and cry of Communists ruled out, and everyone including the Communists contributing their best, whether on the Executive Board, shop stewards' committees or picket lines, to the victory of the strike;

4. The Fisher Body local union counteracted the efforts of General Motors and the local newspapers aided by the action of Green, Wharton and the local C.L.U. leadership, to isolate the strike by organizing a broad People's Conference. In five days' time, 99 trade unions (a majority of those affiliated to the C.L.U.) and 116 other fraternal, civic, religious and political organizations responded with a total of 268 delegates and 33 elected observers.

Immediately following this successful People's Conference, an overflow mass meeting in support of the Fisher Body strike was held, addressed by Homer Martin, Allan Haywood and other C.I.O. and craft union leaders, where representatives of all important participating organizations, including the Communist Party, were officially introduced to the audience.

5. The U.A.W.O. had rid itself of the reactionaries, Dillon and Company; had further isolated the reactionaries within the ranks of its own leading committees and adopted a militant class struggle policy of strike conduct. In this connection the Cleveland auto strikers feel especially proud of their own Cleveland U.A.W.A. leader, Wyndham Mortimer, who not only took an active part in the national direction of the strike but at all critical moments found time to revisit his own Cleveland locals.

6. They relied on their own organized strength, inside and outside the plants. Remembering the promises and arbitration boards of two years ago, they made sure they had an agreement before trusting in anyone, whether it be General Motors, the President or the Governor.

Realizing that their fight with General Motors was not yet over, the victory meeting of Cleveland Fisher Body strikers who ratified the national agreement also adopted a resolution which stated in part the following:

"At the same time, the members of the union realize that the fight of the union is not yet over. We have won a victory, but this victory is not yet complete. Our job is not finished with the official conclusion of the strike. Our big job now is the building of our union. Our experience has proven that only with a strong union in the shop, with every worker a member of the union, can we be assured that our demands will further be granted and our grievances satisfactorily adjusted. The job of building the union is the job of every member of our local. We must resolve that every member becomes a volunteer organizer for our union and upon returning to work will honestly and patiently try to convince his fellow workers to join the union if he is not yet a member. Every member should proudly wear his union button in or out of the shop. This duty of every member is just as important as reporting for picket duty and committee work during the strike. After the strike, the picket line transfers its work in the shop with these new methods. We

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expect every member to live up to this duty as honest and loyal union men and women."

They then elaborated a system of department committees and shop stewards to guarantee that the agreement would be enforced.

In this strike, the Communists participated more actively than ever before as active union members. Dealing with this question, the last strike edition of the Communist Party shop paper, *Spark Plug*, which appeared twice weekly during the strike, stated as follows:

"We Communists in the union, whether on the Executive Board, among the shop stewards, on committees or on the picket line, have given our best as a part of our Local Union No. 45 to win the strike. We Communists feel happy that in almost every instance our ideas become the policy of the strike. We do not say this boastfully. We have no interests separate and apart from the auto workers or the labor movement. We are a solid part of it. Our *Daily Worker* and *Spark Plug* have been read and received by the great majority as never before. Hundreds who previously fell for the old line of 'Red scare' see in our Party a fighting progressive force for everything which is to build a mighty labor movement—a labor movement which will continue the battle against the economic royalists for a still better world to live in.

"The strike victory was only possible because of the loyalty, devotion, sacrifice, and unity of thousands of union men. The majority are not Communists but together we had one common aim. We have won new recruits into the Communist Party during the strike. Now, with the building of the union, let us build a still more powerful Communist Party in the Fisher Body plant of hundreds of members in the coming weeks."

UNITY IN THE TRADE UNIONS

In dealing with the important question of the struggle for trade union unity, Comrade Browder declared at the last Central Committee meeting:

"It is necessary to fight to preserve unity below, in the city councils, in the state federations, to prevent the threat of a split from being carried through, to put up organized resistance to the plans of the splitters. . . . It is necessary to emphasize the need of keeping the C.I.O. forces together. We fight against any tendencies among the weak-kneed leaders of some of these unions to abandon the fight and surrender to the reactionary policies of the Executive Council. We emphasize at every point that under no circumstances will we allow any weakening of the work of building the progressive movement inside the reactionary unions, those still dominated by the reactionaries."

While there has been demonstrated increased united action, as in the case of picket support to the Fisher Body strikers, response to the People's Conference, raising of $1,500 by the rubber unions in Akron to the striking East Coast marine workers and many other examples, nevertheless, the need of an organized struggle against the reactionaries of the A. F. of L. craft unions is not fully appreciated within the C.I.O. unions. Too often there are adopted "very aggressive" policies of setting up Labor Congresses and similar bodies, which have within them the germ of dual C.L.U.'s and will play precisely into the hands of the A. F. of L. reactionaries who are only looking for an opportunity to split the trade union movement. The uniting of the C.I.O. unions for joint action is necessary and advisable, but it must not lead to isolation from the other unions, but rather be an instrument to unite in the C.L.U.'s and in the day-to-day organizing work, all industrial and craft unions toward a more powerful and united trade union movement, based upon C.I.O. policies.

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TRADE UNION TASKS

It is imperative to coordinate the activities in the main mass production industries and in this way hold and consolidate the gains in the auto and rubber industries, uniting with the U.M.W.A. to face the more difficult task of completing the job in steel. Such an organized force together with other trade unions and all other progressive forces will also become a powerful political weapon for independent labor political action in the coming municipal elections.

Toward this objective, the Communist Party has outlined for its members in these industries who are active union members and leaders, a line of policy which will continue the progress already recorded since the C.I.O. entered the field with such successful results.

Automobile: To finish the job of unionizing the Fisher plant in Cleveland so that it is 100 per cent organized, establishing the necessary Union Shop Steward apparatus, to represent the interests of the men in the plant—begin a "mopping up" unionizing drive in all the small auto parts plants throughout the state. Establish the necessary coordinating apparatus as District Auto Councils in all communities. Take advantage of the concessions by General Motors to push for better working conditions in the majority of other shops.

Rubber: Support all proposals of the international and local union officers in drafting an agreement for submission to the rubber trust "Big Three." To guarantee the maximum support and understanding, the membership should discuss same in their local unions. The Communist Party supports the popular demands proposed for such an agreement such as: reduction of speed-up; increase of wages, particularly in the lower brackets; abolition of piecework and a guaranteed minimum wage; elimination of company unions; a sweeping adjustment of accummulated grievances and provision for speedy adjustment of future grievances; recognition of the U.R.W.A. as collective bargaining agent.

To meet and defeat the company threat of decentralization, which is agitating the Akron rubber workers, the U.R.W.A. must initiate an intensive organizing drive in all rubber plants outside of Akron, especially in New England, Detroit and Los Angeles and the South. As a part of this organizing drive, special attention should be given to unionizing the thousands of Negro workers in Firestone and other non-Akron plants, to insure unity of action and the utilizing of the militant fighting ability of the Negro workers.

Coal Mining: Support of the U.M.W.A. for immediate signing of a new agreement by the coal operators with definite concessions to the coal miners.

Steel: Utilizing of all the active forces to complete the job of unionizing the steel industry. To facilitate this decisive task it is imperative to activize the maximum number of volunteer organizers inside the plant and establish a system of department committees, without which the ability and resources of the thousands of steel workers will not be fully utilized. While it must be clear that the task of defeating the U.S. Steel Trust will be more difficult than General Motors,

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this can be facilitated and made easier by unionizing the key departments in every mill.

While laying the main emphasis on recruiting into the S.W.O.C., a necessary part of this task is to continue energetic work among the employee representatives and not allow the steel trust to rebuild another instrument of hesitant, misled and backward workers against the C.I.O.

Such a line of action, fully in accord with the general policies of the C.I.O., will speed up and coordinate the drive against these economic royalists who have the common people of Ohio at their mercy—who not only rob and exploit the workers in the factory, but pull the strings in Columbus, which lay new burdens upon the common people through increased taxes, cutting of relief appropriations, etc.

PROGRESSIVE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The progressive trade union forces of the state, C.I.O. and craft, are "marking time politically, waiting for new developments instead of helping bring them about". While much greater energy has been displayed by individual unions in legislative affairs, the efforts of the State Farmer-Labor Party Promotional Committee to unite these into a People's Lobby at Columbus with agreement on a minimum labor legislative program have not materialized as yet.

Legislative programs have been adopted by the Ohio Federation of Labor, the United Automobile Workers of America, the U.M.W.A., the Building Trades State Council, the State Council of the I.T.U. and a number of other trade union bodies. Important bills introduced include:

1. State wage payment and collection bill.
2. Labor anti-injunction bill.
3. To make it unlawful for any sheriff or elected officer to appoint a Deputy Sheriff or police officer on the payroll of any other than the state, county, city, or township where they will be employed.
4. To make silicosis a compensable disease.
5. A state Labor Relations Act.
6. To repeal criminal syndicalism act.
7. To repeal State Lien clause in old age pension law, abolishing transfer of applicant's property to state.
8. Providing salary increases for state employees as follows: Less than $100 per month, 25 per cent; less than $150, 10 per cent; less than $200, 5 per cent.
9. Relief Standards Bill guaranteeing minimum relief standards.
10. Protection of rights of minority parties by simplification of election laws.

The N.A.A.C.P., supported by the National Negro Congress, has introduced amendments to the Ohio Civil Rights Bill putting teeth into it, after the recent action of the State Supreme Court ruling against the rights of the Negro people in department stores. The National Negro Congress has also outlined a legislative program in the interests of the Negro people including:

1. Withdrawal of state aid from all public institutions discriminating against Negroes.
2. Forbidding use of terms "Negro", "colored", etc., on all job application

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blanks and examination records, etc.

3. Negro representatives on all state and regional housing authorities, and on all similar constitutional bodies, permanent, temporary, emergency and otherwise.

4. We must work to abolish discrimination in all hospitals serving the public in so far as hospitals serve the public.

(a) Work toward the placing of colored doctors and nurses to do their interne work;

(b) placing of colored physicians and nurses on the staffs of all state and municipally owned hospital and health centers.

5. Relief to be administered according to needs regardless of race, color or creed.

6. Continuance of P.W.A.

7. Proper housing for the low income group in accordance with the Ellenbogen Bill.

8. Equal educational opportunities for children living in the slum districts. Equal equipment in the schools and adequate playgrounds and parks for congested districts.

9. We go on record for the Mitchell Bill which:

(a) Abolishes photographs in Civil Service examinations;

(b) Makes it mandatory that the person receiving the highest grade in Civil Service examinations receive the appointment.

10. We go on record for the Mitchell Bill, which makes Red Caps employees of the railroads.

It is imperative that the decision of the Ohio Farmer-Labor Party Promotional Committee aiming at uniting first in consultation and later in action, the maximum number of labor and progressive organizations behind a minimum progressive legislative program be carried into effect as speedily as possible.

Such united action in Columbus, supported by united action of the membership of the same organizations in the localities, will, together with the experience of the trade unions in these great strike battles, lay the solid foundation for some form of independent labor political action in the coming municipal elections in every important locality.

ROLE OF PARTY

In all these strike struggles and other important mass activities, the Communist Party and its members are playing an important and sometimes decisive role. The covered character of the work of many leading Communists who occupy strategic posts of trade union leadership results in the real contribution of our Party not being made known publicly at this time, although ever greater numbers of people are realizing the common features of our printed policy and that being employed in many important strike struggles. This covering of our real role is accentuated by the unsatisfactory independent activities of our Party in important political affairs and campaigns, slow growth of the Party and Y.C.L. and impermissible status of the circulation of the *Daily Worker*.

A recent examination of Party recruiting in Ohio revealed that despite the active participation of our Party forces in the steel, auto and rubber unionization drives, the intensive work in developing a broad movement in support of Spanish democracy, active

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work amongst the unemployed and in a number of important united front activities and organizations as well as several months of energetic election campaigning, there were recruited during the last six months of 1936 only 327 new members.

A further examination according to important industries like steel, auto and rubber industries, revealed that in the seven-month period from July, 1936, to Feb. 1, 1937, the following were the results in building the Party:

Steel: Youngstown—recruited 14 steel workers out of 33 new members; West Side, Cleveland—recruited 5 steel workers out of 23 new members; Canton—recruited 10 steel workers out of 26 new members; Ohio Valley—recruited 5 steel workers out of 92 new members.

Automobile: St. Clair, Cleveland—recruited 13 auto workers out of 70 new members (and all of these were recruited during Fisher strike); Toledo —recruited 1 auto worker out of 24 new members.

Rubber: Akron—recruited 5 rubber workers out of 21 new members.

Coal: Ohio Valley—recruited 45 coal miners out of 92 new members.

These figures reveal the absolute underestimation of recruiting by the Party in Ohio. A comparison of these figures with the activity and role of our Party and its individual leaders in the trade unions, the unionization drives and other forms of mass work, shows that there is a serious danger of liquidating the independent political role of the Party into these general mass movements, which are important but can never substitute for the leading political role of our Party.

To overcome this situation by intensive efforts to build the Party and Y.C.L., equip the Party members politically, better functioning of our Party lower organizations (especially shop and industrial branches) and increased circulation of the *Daily Worker* is the central and all-important task of the Party in Ohio.

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THE TRIAL OF THE TROTSKYITE AGENTS OF FASCISM

BY I. AMTER

THE Radek-Piatakov trial, preceded by the Kamenev-Zinoviev trial, is clear proof of how world imperialism is making incessant efforts, not only to mobilize world opinion and world reactionary forces against the Soviet Union from without, but as well to use all disgruntled, degenerate elements within the Soviet Union for undermining the country and the Soviet machinery from within. This one can easily understand. The sharpest contradiction exists between capitalism on the one hand and socialism on the other. Capitalism itself is undermined by its own contradictions, as well as through clashes with the workers and farmers of their own countries and the colonial people subject to the imperialist powers. The struggle of imperialism against the Soviet Union will continue and hence one should not be surprised at the continued efforts to discredit and assail the Soviet Union.

The trials of August, 1936, and January, 1937, are not two isolated instances of these efforts. Nor are the trials announced to take place very soon the end of these efforts. On the contrary, the imperialists have tried, from the beginning of the existence of the Soviet Union, to undermine and overthrow it by intrigue and plots within the country as well as by armed forces from without.

TRIALS OPEN AND ABOVE-BOARD

It must be stated in advance that these trials were *open* trials. At the trial last August, there were present representatives of the capitalist press of the entire world, including the *New York Times, Herald Tribune,* Associated Press, etc. United States Ambassador Davies also attended the trial. An even more extensive representation of the press was provided for at the last trial. Not only were the above papers and press services represented, but even Hearst had direct representatives in Moscow. Ambassador Davies attended the trial every day. The whole world knows of what transpired at these trials. The reports in the capitalist press were all favorable. They could not but report everything that took place. Therefore any attempt on the part of the fascist Trotskyites to pretend that the press was deluded or could not understand falls aside as a ridiculous argument.

This same press, however, in its editorial pages and through special ar-

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ticles, took pains to "interpret" what took place in Moscow in an entirely different light. There was no point of agreement between the reports sent by their correspondents in Moscow and what appeared in the editorial columns. This shows the venom with which the capitalist press looks upon the Soviet government and how the entire capitalist press of the United States—from Hearst to the small town papers—took the Trotsky conspirators under their wing as an ally in the struggle against the rights of the workers, against democracy, against the Soviet Union.

Further—let it be understood that the defendants were offered legal counsel, but all of them, except three, rejected it, declaring they would defend themselves. Surely Kamenev, Zinoviev, Radek, Sokolnikov, Piatakov needed no aid for their "defense".

FACTS ESTABLISHED AT TRIAL

Let us briefly summarize what was proven at these trials:

1. At the Kamanev-Zinoviev trial it was definitely proven that emissaries of the Kamenev-Zinoviev "united center", through the mediation of Trotsky's son Sedov, in Berlin, met Trotsky in 1932 at the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen—a cafe that has a common entrance with the Grand Hotel Kobenhavn. Since 1931, it was proven in the trials, Trotsky has been the directing head of the conspiracy within and without the Soviet Union.

2. On the basis of the conspiracy hatched, not only were the corrupt, degenerate Trotsky-Kamenev-Zinoviev agents organized within the Soviet Union, but agents were sent to the Soviet Union from abroad. With the aid of the secret police of Berlin and of Warsaw, passports were secured for these agents into the Soviet Union. As a result of their plots, one of the best Bolsheviks of the Soviet Union, Sergei Kirov, was murdered. For this, Kamenev and Zinoviev took responsibility, working under the direction of Trotsky. An attempt to assassinate Comrade Stalin at the Seventh World Congress, which failed; the plot to bomb Stalin, Kaganovich, Vorishilov, Molotov and others when they stood upon the mausoleum reviewing the parade on May Day, 1936, which failed—show how far these rats and scoundrels can go.

At this trial other names and evidence were mentioned as co-conspirators. This led to the second trial, of Radek-Piatakov and Company, the so-called "parallel center".

3. The Radek-Piatakov trial established the following:

(a) That they had been guilty of the wrecking of Soviet industry—mining, railroad, food, etc.—as a result of which hundreds of workers were killed and crippled, Red Army soldiers were murdered.

(b) Sabotage was engaged in with the aim of reducing the productivity of Socialist industry.

(c) Trotsky agents stole documents of the Soviet government and especially of the military commissariat, furnishing them to the Japanese government.

(d) Further attempts were made to assassinate leading Communists—Molotov, Voroshilov, etc.

(c) Piatakov visited Trotsky in December, 1935, as corroborated by the Norwegian paper *Tidans Tegu*, in its issue of January 27, 1937. At this visit

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he was given distinct instructions to proceed with assassinations. This was also communicated to Radek by means of writing in invisible ink.

(f) Radek was informed by Trotsky that he, Trotsky, had made an agreement with Hitler and Japan for war against the Soviet Union in 1937.

These facts show the degeneracy and complete moral and political bankruptcy of the Trotskyite bandits.

TROTSKYITE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY "ARGUMENTATION"

What was the basis for this degeneracy? The argument of the Trotskyites runs as follows: (1) Socialism is not being built in the Soviet Union. It is nothing more than "capitalist industrialism". Very smart Trotskyites declare that this is even embodied in the new Soviet Constitution in that it allows personal property to be accumulated; that there is a difference in salaries between the higher and lower categories, etc. This is sheerest charlatanry and humbug, since the whole world knows, and the capitalists particularly heed the fact that industry is almost 100 per cent socialized, agriculture is collectivized. The means of production and distribution have been socialized.

2. In face of the rise of fascism in the world, the Trotskyites declare that, in view of the international fascist alliance—of Hitler, Mussolini, Japan, and other smaller states of Europe—fascism is invincible.

3. Being invincible and faced with economic need from within, fascism must resort to war.

4. Therefore, war is inevitable and is directed against the Soviet Union. In this war, the Soviet Union will and must be defeated.

TROTSKYITES DID THEIR PART

In view of these "theories," based upon a lack of faith in the working class, in the belief that the democratic peoples of the world cannot and will not unite against fascism and war, the bandit wreckers, supposedly being opposed to "capitalist industrialism" in the Soviet Union and pretending to want to establish "genuine" socialism, organize to do their part in the destruction of the Soviet Union. Therefore, by wrecking, spying and assassination, they begin their work. They cannot deny that wrecking did take place, that spying was carried out, that Kirov was assassinated. There appeared at the trial workers of the railroad and mining industries who were maimed and crippled for life by these bandits. Kirov is dead. The Japanese government has procured documents through these Trotskyite agents. Dare these murderers and wreckers deny it?

They hoped through wreckage and sabotage to be able to create distrust toward the Soviet government. Radek admitted at the trial that these outlaw groups could procure no mass base among the workers. They had been defeated and discredited in the minds of the masses of the Soviet people. But they hoped by means of wreckage and sabotage to be able to place the blame upon the government and prove that it is an "inefficient" government; an "incompetent" government; a "bureaucratic" government.

As a result of this work and aiding the fascist governments, which through a victorious war against the Soviet Union would overthrow the Soviet

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government, they, the Trotskyite fascists, would rise into power. This they justified, as Radek, quoting Trotsky, declared, on the basis of the Clemenceau thesis. In 1918, when the Kaiser's troops were fast approaching Paris and the defense was weakening, Clemenceau returned to dictatorial power in France. So, too, Trotsky, riding on the crest of the wave against the Soviet Union, would become the "dictator" of Russia, in order to "save" Russia. In return for this fascist cooperation with Trotsky, certain concessions were to be made to Hitler and Japan. The Ukraine, including 1,500,000 Jews, was to be handed over to Hitler; the Urals, with its rich iron, coal and other ore resources, to Hitler; parts of Siberia to Japan; the Sakhalin Islands with its tremendous oil resources to Japan, not only for war against the Soviet Union but also for eventual war against the United States.

This is the diabolical conspiracy hatched by the wreckers and murderers together with the bloody Hitler, Mussolini, and Japanese fascists!

Are these merely conjectures and suppositions on the part of honest workers? Let us prove our contentions.

OUT OF THEIR OWN MOUTHS

1. Let us quote the Trotsky Opposition Bulletin Nos. 36-37 of October, 1934:

"It would be childish to think that the Stalinist bureaucracy can be removed with the help of the party or the Soviet Congress. There are not left any *normal* constitutional ways for removing the ruling clique. They can be forced to hand over power to the proletarian vanguard [meaning the Trotskyites] only by force."

2. At the Kamenev-Zinoviev trial there was produced in evidence a postcard written by a French Trotskyite to his friend, declaring, "*Death to Stalin*".

3. At the meeting called by the "Committee for the Defense of Trotsky" at Hotel Delano (jim-crow hotel) on December 18, 1936, Max Eastman, one of the first Trotskyites in the United States, declared:

"The new Constitution [Soviet Constitution] is nothing but a crude and obvious political side-show. . . . the caricature of representative government. Does it not compare with the totalitarian states of Hitler and Mussolini? From that date it has ceased to be a workers' republic. . . . As to socialism being achieved in the Soviet Union, exactly the opposite is the truth. The foundations of socialism are effectively washed out and nothing but a political revolution will restore it."

4. In a voluminous, scurrilous tract, trying to disprove the evidence at the Kamenev-Zinoviev trial, Max Schachtman, Trotskyite, leading Socialist, and American editor of Trotsky's writings, declares on page 131 of *Behind the Moscow Trials* the following:

"The Stalin bureaucracy has itself wiped out the possibility of the peaceful reform of the regime. . . . The despotism which is killing the regime can only be removed by revolutionary methods—it has left the proletariat no other alternative."

5. In February, 1936, Maurice Spector and Lyman Paine, American Trotskyites, visited Trotsky in Oslo. Upon his return to the United States, Spector made a report to the Trotsky caucus, to which was invited a former member of the Workers Party, now a member of the Communist Party, Arnold Johnson. At this meeting Spector made a report stating that Trotsky's arguments were that there are "class lines" in the Soviet Union and the only way to destroy the "upper classes" represented

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by Stalin was to organize a counter-revolution. According to the report of Comrade Johnson, published in the *Daily Worker* of January 17, 1937, Spector was asked by another Trotskyite, Gould, "Did Trotsky mean a definite violent counter-revolution?" Spector replied, "Yes" and emphasized that "he was careful to get this right".

6. In an arranged speech from Mexico over the telephone to the Hippodrome meeting in New York on February 9, a speech which he did not deliver, Trotsky said:

"For our part, we consider the Stalinists as traitors to the interests of the Soviet masses and the world proletariat. . . .

"The question is: to aid the demoralized bureaucracy against the people or the progressive forces of the people against the bureaucracy. . . . Stalin's regime is doomed. Will the capitalist counter-revolution or workers' democracy replace it?"

This statement shows the zealous desire of Trotsky to overthrow Stalin and put an end to the Soviet government.

From Mexico comes the word of Trotsky himself—in a signed article in Hearst's press given to the Universal Service—the Hearst telegraph service—and published in the *New York American* on January 26, 1937. We read the following:

"Stalin is fighting against the Socialists who dare to criticize the despotism of the privileged bureaucracy.

"This is equivalent to an alliance with the enemies of socialism.

"Inside the [Communist] party Stalin has put himself above all criticism and above the state.

"It is impossible to displace him except by assassination."

Can there any longer be any question as to where these murderers stand, beginning with Trotsky in 1931 and ending with Trotsky in Mexico in 1937, planning, plotting, organizing overthrow of the Soviet government and assassination of the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet government?

HEARST AND REACTIONARIES SUPPORT TROTSKY

Who supports the Trotskyites?

1. Hearst, the enemy of labor, the enemy of the trade union movement, the friend of Hitler and Mussolini. Hearst has opened his whole press to the Trotskyite underminers of the labor movement and of the People's Front.

2. The whole capitalist press, ranging from Hearst down to the so-called "liberal" papers like the *New York Post* which, while pretending to help the labor movement, give equal consideration to all enemies of labor. The reactionary *New York Herald Tribune*, in an editorial on February 11, states,

"The democratic nations have been persuaded by these trials that Russia is in the hands of a Negro or a Caligula. If Trotsky has any light—however lurid and sulphurous—to throw on the anti-Trotsky pogrom in the Soviet Union, the outside world wants it."

3. It is necessary to mention in particular the semi-fascist George Sokolsky who, while doing everything in his power to stab the auto workers' strike in the back, at the same time wrote an article on Trotsky in the *Herald Tribune*. In this article he significantly declared that if in 1918 Trotsky had been a member of the "Big Five", the Soviet Union would have returned to the side of the allies!

Thus the whole capitalist press, which features Trotsky on its front

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pages, and the whole reactionary capitalist class take Trotsky under their wing. To use Trotskyism as a destructive element in the labor movement; to cause doubts regarding the Soviet government and socialism; to sow discontent and prevent unity of the working class; to obstruct the building of the People's Front—are of tremendous importance to the capitalist class.

LIBERALS DEFEND U.S.S.R. AGAINST TROTSKYISM

Certain liberals of the United States were for a time enticed by the "ultra-revolutionary" phrases of Trotsky. Some of them joined the Trotsky "Defense Committee". It is gratifying, therefore, that nine members of this committee have already withdrawn. This was initiated by the brilliant statement of Mauritz Hallgren, contributing editor of the *Baltimore Sun,* who in the midst of his declaration states,

> "Here are men awaiting death on charges that Trotsky says are utterly false and here is Trotsky who contends that he can prove that they are false—and yet he withholds this indispensible proof for the sake of a book, or for the sake of an international inquiry not yet arranged!"

Truly it can be said that Trotsky, allied with fascism and his counter-revolutionary supporters in the Soviet Union, and having five months between the first and the second trial, has withheld this "information" and let these conspirators go to their death without raising his voice. Is this not proof again that Trotsky has *no* proof, has no evidence but only that which would have trapped him and his colleagues in the Soviet Union still more and made him, Trotsky, useless to the fascists throughout the world!

Following upon Hallgren's statement Louis Gannet, literary editor of the *Herald Tribune,* Leroy Bowman, President of the Parent-Teacher Association of New York, Sam Jaffe, prominent actor, have resigned from the Trotsky "Defense Committee". Why did they resign? Because, as Hallgren says, "The American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky has, perhaps unwittingly, become an instrument of the Trotskyites for political intervention against the Soviet Union."

The result of this has been that some 70 liberals, thus far, not associated with the Trotsky Defense Committee, have come out firmly against the Trotskyites, for defense of the Soviet Union.

Thus, Trotskyism is exposed through its own words, its own deeds, its own plots, its own intrigues, as a degenerate, corrupt, bankrupt political group of scavengers, now in the employ of the fascists, in plots against the progress of the people.

FUNDAMENTAL THEORETICAL FALLACIES OF TROTSKYISM

Is this due to momentary aberrations of the Trotskyite fascists? Not at all. The theoretical basis of this bankruptcy lies in Trotsky's theory of the "permanent revolution", announced as early as 1905. This so-called theory declares that socialism cannot be built in one country alone. On the contrary, the working class of one country must receive "state aid" from the workers of other countries, in order to maintain itself. In other words, permanent revolution means world-wide revolution within a short time.

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This is based upon a lack of faith in the workers, a lack of confidence in their ability to destroy capitalism and build the new system of society.

Lenin taught us, and the Sixth and Seventh World Congresses of the Communist International emphasized it, that we are living in an era of war and proletarian revolution. In this era the working class breaks through first where the imperialist chain is weakest. This was old Russia. From that time on, the working class moved forward in revolutionary struggle. But the movement is not a straight line. It is a zigzag course pushing forward, suffering setbacks, gathering strength, and pushing on once more until the goal is achieved.

The correctness of this Leninist theory is borne out by the maintenance and growing strength of the Soviet Union in the nineteen years of its existence, and the building of socialism in the midst of an imperialist world. Nevertheless, in 1922, five years after the Russian Revolution, Trotsky, in the second edition of his book, *1905*, declared that "history has confirmed the correctness of my theory". History only confirmed the bankruptcy of his theory.

TROTSKYISM—ENEMY OF PEASANTS

Trotsky furthermore has no faith in the peasantry. In 1926-27, during the struggle against the correct line of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Preobrazhensky, the "theoretician" of the Trotskyites, declared that the relationship of the workers to the peasantry is that of an imperialist country to a colonial country; namely, that of a plunderer, exploiter, robber of the resources and man-power of a colonial country. This is a sign of open hostility and enmity to the peasantry.

Lenin, on the other hand, laid down the correct thesis that the working class leads the revolution and has as its natural ally the peasantry—especially the poor peasants and the agricultural workers—all those who suffer under capitalism, even though they have a petty-bourgeois ideology characterized by a desire for ownership of the soil. Lenin declared that it is the duty of the revolutionary party of the working class to win over these natural allies, and either win over the petty bourgeoisie of the city—liberals, intellectuals, students, small business men, etc., who also have an interest in the struggle against capitalism—or at least neutralize them. This was the basis of the success of the Russian Revolution. It is the liberation and mobilization of these forces today, on a program meeting the immediate needs and in the struggle for the political and economic needs of the masses and all progressive people that is called the Peopl'e Front.

TROTSKYISM—ENEMY OF PEOPLE'S FRONT

Trotsky and Trotskyism are in open enmity to the People's Front. Trotskyism damns the People's Front in Spain and in France, as a "betrayal of the working class". But if there were no People's Front in Spain today, fascism would rule. The actions of the Trotskyites in Spain and their efforts to split the People's Front are actions of treason to the people, for which the Spanish and the Catalonian government are making them pay as traitors. If there were no People's Front in France, French fascism, with the aid of Hitler, would have established a fascist dictatorship. It is the growing

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movement for a People's Front in Mexico that has brought Trotsky into negotiation with Louis Cabrera, a reactionary leader, and into opposition to the People's Front, the National Revolutionary Party, which is part of the People's Front, and President Cardenas. Treason, wherever these Trotskyites appear and operate!

TROTSKY'S STRUGGLE AGAINST THE REVOLUTIONARY LINE SINCE 1903

The struggle against the correct Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist line is not a new struggle of Trotsky and Trotskyism. As early as 1903, at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, an apparently "simple" organizational question was the center of discussion, namely, what constitutes membership in the revolutionary party. Lenin declared that to be a revolutionist one must (1) accept the program of the party, (2) pay dues to the party, and (3) *carry out revolutionary activity under the discipline of a unit of a party.*

Trotsky and others took the position that it was sufficient to accept the program and pay dues to the party. How could one imagine a revolutionary party aiming to build a machine capable of leading the working class to the destruction of capitalism, unless there were *coordinated activity of every member of the party, who, after discussion has been held and decisions have been made, carries out the decisions together with every other member of the party!* This is obvious. The result was that at this Congress, Lenin, leading the majority, laid down the line for a revolutionary party. The majority (Bolshevik) defeated the minority (Menshevik).

TROTSKY NEVER A BOLSHEVIK

But Bolshevik and Menshevik mean something more than majority and minority, respectively. Bolshevik means one who adheres loyally and devotedly to the party line and carries it out fully. Menshevik means careerist, opportunist, individualist, who decides for himself what he shall or shall not do. This is characteristic of Trotsky and Trotskyism who disregard all party authority, all party decisions, embark upon adventures of their own against the party and against the interests of the working class.

TROTSKYITE ASSASSINS FOUGHT LENIN

From 1903 on Trotsky fought against Lenin. Lenin continually polemized against Trotsky and the Mensheviks. Trotsky only joined the Communist Party in July, 1917, a few months before the proletarian revolution. In every critical period in the struggle of the Party, both before and after the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship, Trotsky and Trotskyism were in opposition: 1918—Brest-Litovsk—opposition to signing the peace treaty, refusing to carry out the decisions of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party on the military front and consequent removal of Trotsky from four fronts. 1921, on the trade union question, proposing to make the trade unions organs of the state and not, as Lenin declared, schools for socialism. 1923-24, opposition to the New Economic Policy, which gave a breathing space to the Russian working class. Upon the death of Lenin, open struggle against the Party and its leaders. 1926-27, organization of underground groups, illegal press in the Soviet Union and abroad

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to undermine the Party and the Soviet government. Since that time and after his exile, open plotting against the Communist Party and the Soviet government. Zinoviev and Kamenev a few days before the armed uprising on November 7, 1917—these scoundrels went to the capitalist press and exposed the fact that the Central Committee of the Communist Party was organizing the masses for the armed uprising, because they disagreed with it. Branded by Lenin as strikebreakers, they recognized their mistakes and Lenin proposed that they be put into the committee for organizing the armed uprising. Radek, Piatakov and others united with these oppositionists in underground, illegal activity against the Party at every critical movement in the consolidation of the Soviet power and the building of socialism.

Where then is the "brutal", "despotic", "bureaucratic" hand of Stalin and the Central Committee, who after the Party expelled them, re-admitted these men into the ranks of the Party, once, twice, three times, believing that they had recognized their wrong. Expelled—readmitted; expelled—readmitted. This is so-called "despotism" that rules the Soviet Union.

But who can imagine deeper hypocrisy than that of Kamenev, Zinoviev and Radek? Radek and Zinoviev admitted at the trial that they were part of the plot and had helped to organize the murder of Kirov. Yet this did not restrain them from writing obituary articles for the *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. Radek, who also was involved in the plot, did not hesitate, after the Kamenev and Zinoviev admissions, to write crucifying articles demanding that this scum be wiped off the face of the earth. Yet Radek himself was part of the plot! Such degeneracy has rarely been heard of.

Trotsky howls; "old Bolsheviks" are being wiped out of the Communist Party. The capitalist press protects these scoundrels, and sheds crocodile tears over the execution of these "old Bolsheviks". *They are not old Bolsheviks.* They are degenerates, assassins whom the united, determined Soviet people have wiped out without hesitation. They will exterminate any of their confreres whom they uncover in plots against the Soviet fatherland.

DIMITROFF—A REAL BOLSHEVIK

How does it happen that these "old Bolsheviks" could not and did not stand up and "expose" Soviet justice? Because they had involved themselves so deeply in plots and their steps were so fully uncovered that they could not but admit every word in the indictment preferred against them by Comrade Vyshinsky. *They amplified the indictment.* Had they stood upon just grounds, if they had been firmly convinced of their innocence, why did they not act like Georgi Dimitroff, who stood alone before the Nazi court in Leipzig and denounced Nazi and world fascism! Simply because they could not.

TRAITORS IN OTHER CRITICAL SITUATIONS

It is well known in history that wherever a crisis arises in a country, weaklings, opportunists and careerists vacillate and topple over. Was not Mussolini before the world war an "ardent", "militant" Socialist dissatisfied with the Socialist Party? Did he line up with the incipient Communist

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Party? No, he became the fascist dictator. Was not Pilsudski another "old Bolshevik", banned to Siberia by the Russian tsars? And yet he died as Marshal Pilsudski, dictator of Poland. Plekhanov, one of the first Russian Marxists, the teacher of Lenin, lined up with Lenin against the Mensheviks in 1903. He cooperated with Lenin in the editorial staff of the *Iskra*. Disagreements followed and by 1914 Plekhanov, the "Marxist", supported tsarist imperialism in the world war. Ramsay McDonald, leader of the British Labor Party, is now a member of the National Government.

Who forgets John Spargo, Charles Edward Russell, William English Walling, who deserted the S.P. in 1917 at the time of America's entrance into the war? Today John Spargo is national committeeman of the Republican Party for the State of Vermont. Who does not remember Aaron Burr and Benedict Arnold, traitors and betrayers of the American revolution of 1776? Every country at a period of revolutionary crisis has its traitors. The Soviet Union has its Kamenevs, Zinovievs, Smirnovs, Radeks, Piatakovs, Sokolnikovs, Serebriakovs, etc.

"RIGHTS" AND "LEFTS" UNITE AGAINST PROGRESS

During the last trial the names of Bukharin and Rykov were mentioned —as Tomsky's was mentioned in the first trial. Bukharin and the other "Rights" in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were against the rapid collectivization, thereby giving aid to the kulaks and other capitalist remnants. They came into opposition with the Party due to their failure to understand Lenin's line for the Communist Party. Today they are linked up with the plots of the Trotsky centers, being given special functions for intriguing among certain parts of the population. It was not remarkable, therefore, that here in United States, those who before were associated with Bukharin line up against the C.P.S.U. and Comrade Stalin in connection with the trials and against the People's Front in Spain. Thus the Lovestonites, through their organ, the *Workers Age*, print scurrilous, cynical articles about the trial in Moscow, presumably by an author "who must remain anonymous". They, at the same time, have made of their organ an organ for the Spanish Trotskyites who are openly splitting the People's Front in face of the fascist military onslaughts on the Spanish democratic republic. They print resolutions of the P.O.U.M., the so-called "Workers Party of Marxist Unity". They write articles against the Communist Party of Spain and the United States on the question of the People's Front. Upon the closing of the Trotskyites' broadcasting station and the suppression of their press, and the announcement that Trotskyite leaders may be put on trial by the Madrid government for treason, the *Workers Age* declares, "This is the logical culmination of the prosecution of the P.O.U.M. for its insistance on a revolutionary [!] line". The splitting of the People's Front is revolutionary! Any decent-minded worker has only one term for their counter-revolutionary cooperation with the fascists—*treason!*

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SOVIET UNION—MAIN SUPPORTER OF SPANISH GOVERNMENT

From Mexico, Trotsky hurls defiance at the C.P.S.U. and particularly Stalin. He shouts that the Soviet Union is sabotaging aid to the Spanish people—when the whole world knows that materially and politically it is the Soviet Union, and to a lesser degree Mexico, that are giving real aid to the Spanish government. Trotsky declares that Stalin is preventing real defense of the Spanish government. Trotsky wants to provoke the Soviet government and facilitate armed attack upon the Soviet Union by the fascists. From Mexico he attacks the Soviet Union, declaring that anti-Semitism is rampant today, and that the Jews must look elsewhere for a national home.

TROTSKYISM FANS ANTI-SEMITISM

Through the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Trotsky in a signed statement on January 23, 1937, declared:

"You ask me whether there still exists the Jewish question in Soviet Russia. Yes, it does. . . . The almighty bureaucracy chokes the development of national culture, as well as culture in general. Furthermore the land of the great proletarian revolution now lives in a period of deep reaction.

"Since 1925 and particularly since 1926, black anti-Semitic demagogy is in operation and goes hand in hand with symbolic trials against the open pogrom makers. . . .

"An important part of the Jewish petty bourgeoisie has been taken into the immense apparatus of the government in industry, commerce, co-operatives, etc. This creates a spirit of anti-Semitism and the leaders are operating with great ability and experience to divert the discontent of the masses towards these middle class Jews instead of themselves."

We quote further:

"But the Jewish people cannot exist without a territory of their own. Zionism is based on this idea."

To be sure Trotsky declares that Palestine may not serve the purpose. Nonetheless, with anti-Semitism rampant in the Soviet Union, according to Trotsky, and Zionism as the hope of the Jews, it is obvious that this is indirect help to Zionism and the world imperialism as against the policy of the Soviet Union and the building of Biro-Bidjan.

Trotsky speaks in the tone of *tsarism*. He takes the position of the imperialist fascists and tries to conceal the fact that anti-Semitism and acts of anti-Semitism are penal offenses within the Soviet Union.

What is the purpose of this attack upon the Soviet Union? It occurs at a time when Hitler is intensifying his brutal oppression on the German Jews; when 3,500,000 Jews in Poland are passing through bloody pogroms; when in Hungary and Rumania attacks are being made upon the Jews; when Mussolini raises his voice against Jews; when in the United States Father Coughlin and the reactionaries are fanning a wave of anti-Semitism. At this time, when the Jews of all over the world look with love to the Soviet Union as the only country that has a correct policy on national minorities; when the national minorities are recognized as a co-equal part in the Soviet government; when the Soviet government helps develop the national culture of every national minority—Trotsky defames Stalin and the Soviet Union.

The purpose of this is clear: (1) To assist the reactionary governments in their attacks upon the Jews as a means

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of evading the discontent that is aroused among the masses because of the economic crisis and the denial of civil rights; (2) to create distrust of the Jews throughout the world toward the Socialist Fatherland; and (3) as part of this, to try to deny the correctness of the line of Lenin and Stalin on the national minority question. Trotsky was prepared, as already stated, to hand over a million and a half Jews in the Ukraine to the bloody mercy of Hitler!

NEGROES SUPPORT SPANISH GOVERNMENT

Thus, too, the Trotskyites are trying to work among the Negroes to undermine their growing faith in the Soviet Union. But Trotsky and Trotskyism are making very little headway, for the Negro peoples of the world have seen Mussolini rape and sack Ethiopia. The same Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, and the fascists of the world are trying to destroy democracy in Spain. Hence we see in Spain 500 Ethiopians fighting at the front for the Spanish government. Prince Gehvet of Ethiopia, embarking for Spain, declared, "I remember the airplanes flying over Ethiopia, slaughtering women and children. I made up my mind to come to Spain to fight with the Spaniards and defend their republic against fascism."

TROTSKYITES IN U.S.—SPLITTERS, DISRUPTERS, SABOTEURS

The American Trotskyites have proven by their actions to be disrupters, disorganizers and supporters of fascism. They have attempted to break the Workers Alliance and the American League Against War and Fascism. They assailed the leaders of the marine strike, both on the West Coast and in the East, in an effort to break the strike. They have sabotaged in steel and rubber. In the name of the Socialist Party, the Trotskyites in Akron, Ohio, and Paterson, N. J., issued leaflets with illustrations declaring that the People's Front in Spain is stabbing the Spanish people in the back. Is there any question then that these wreckers, assassins, disrupters, plotters, spies and traitors have no place within the working class and must be driven out?

We Communists have very definite tasks in the struggle against fascism and Trotskyism. The question of Trotskyism is not one to be raised only where the small number of Trotskyites are to be found. On the contrary, the capitalist class has shown its ability to use the worst degenerates as stool pigeons and spies. They are making of Trotsky not only a "martyr" but a "hero", since he is of invaluable assistance to reaction today. Therefore, Trotskyism must be raised among the broadest masses of people and the full meaning of Trotskyism explained. In doing so we must fully analyze the trials in Moscow, the background of the conspirators, so that the workers will understand what these people are.

AROUSE MASSES TO DANGER OF TROTSKYITE FASCISTS

Our tasks consist of:

1. Thorough discussions in the Party and Y.C.L. ranks to acquaint particularly the new Party members with the meaning of Trotskyism.

2. The raising of the issue in every trade union and mass organization in order to stimulate and intensify the struggle against reaction and fascism, and their ally Trotskyism—to uncover and drive them out. The question should be discussed with the comrades

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in these organizations and plans worked out as to how to bring it into every organization.

3. We should reach the liberals, who readily will follow the line of the Communist Party if the facts are brought before them, and who will comprehend what an ally Trotskyism is to fascism. Plentiful use of the statement of Mauritz Hallgren, forums and discussions will help to clarify.

4. We have, above all, the task of helping the honest Socialists, not only in regard to Trotskyism as such, but above all to clean their ranks of the Trotskyite counter-revolutionary disrupters. The Trotskyites are doing everything in their power to capture or split the S.P. The Socialists' convention is less than a month hence. It is our job to meet with the honest Socialists, furnish them with facts and argument and, above all, rally them for action against the disrupters and for a united front on Spain and all economic issues.

5. This is tied up with not only more serious reading of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* by our Party and Y.C.L. members, but also a broadening of the circulation of the Party press among the broadest sections of the working class. Along with this is the reading and circulation of the Party literature on this and allied subjects. And particularly important in this connection is the spreading of the speech of Comrade Stalin on the new Soviet Constitution, which is the best answer to all the Trotskyite plots and intrigues against the building of socialism.

6. This entails, however, a more intensive study of Marxism-Leninism, so that our Party members are grounded not only on the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union but on the theories and policies of our Party and the Communist International. Thus, in the midst of the struggle against fascism and Trotskyism, they will become better Communists, we will train more leaders and furnish our Party with the needed strength to carry on the struggle against our enemy.

RECRUIT WORKERS INTO THE PARTY

7. In the midst of this struggle, with the masses responding, we must carry on an intensive recruiting campaign. When the struggles are sharp, the workers take sides. The bringing of Trotskyism into the world arena on the side of fascism shows how acute the situation is. Hence, with proper attention, we can recruit thousands of new members into the Party and Y.C.L.

The struggle against Trotskyism is not, as the liberals pretend, a "difference of opinion" between followers of the Communist International and the Trotskyites. It is a struggle against fascism in all of its ramifications.

This year will be a decisive year. Every Party member must be on the alert. The struggle against fascism and war; for support of democracy in Spain; the building of the Farmer-Labor Party, and defense of the Soviet Union are on the order of the day. Building the trade union movement, strengthening the Workers Alliance; fighting for the civil rights of the people, will make it possible for us in the United States to rally the masses of the people, together with the democratic people of Europe, in cooperation with the Soviet Union, to smash fascism and Trotskyism and to prevent war.

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TROTSKYISM IN THE UNITED STATES

BY C. A. HATHAWAY

"By lining up either on the side of Stalin or that of Trotsky, they [American liberals] are giving their convictions about Russian politics predominance over the need for unity in supporting immediately desirable measures in this country, measures that have no relation whatever to the guilt or innocence of the men recently condemned and sentenced in the Soviet Union." (*New Republic,* Feb. 17, 1937.)

THAT is typical of how some liberal spokesmen place the issues raised by the second trial of Trotskyists: "Russian politics . . . no concern to Americans."

But is such an approach correct?

In August of last year Zinoviev, Kamenev and their co-defendants admitted that they had adopted sabotage, wrecking activities, and assassination of Communist leaders as their methods of struggle against socialist construction in the Soviet Union; they admitted cooperation with Hitler's Gestapo. Now, at the second trial of Trotskyist leaders, that of Radek, Piatakov, Sokolnikov and fourteen others, they confirm the confessions at the first trial as the policies of their group—*and they go further:* they admit that their activities include a direct deal with Hitler and the Japanese militarists; they acknowledged an agreement to turn over the Ukraine and Eastern Siberian provinces to the fascists, enslaving these people, in exchange for fascist aid in their counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet power. At both trials the principals—Zinoviev and Kamenev at the first, Radek and Piatakov at the second—singled out Leon Trotsky as their theoretician and leader and admitted direct connections with him (letters, visits, messengers, etc.). After these trials, Trotsky himself confirmed the charges against him when he brazenly declared (*N. Y. American,* Jan. 25): "It is impossible to displace him [Stalin] except by assassination."

Within a few weeks after this trial the Trotskyists of Spain also showed their bloody fascist hands. While the Spanish people are waging a heroic life-and-death battle at terrible sacrifice to maintain their freedom and to open the way for social progress there, the Trotskyists wage war against the People's Front government and against the Soviet Union, which has given the Spanish people every possible aid in their struggle. Their struggle against the People's Front and against the people's anti-fascist military bodies became so openly and direct aid to the fascists, that the government was compelled to close down their radio station, their halls and their press and begin a campaign to drive them out of

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the people's movement. In Catalonia, where they were in the government, they were removed. This demonstrates that Trotskyists, no matter where they are, whether in the Soviet Union, in France, in Spain, or here, are a menace to the labor and progressive movement.

Yet the *New Republic* editorial, reflecting a criminal indifference to the fate of the Soviet Union and Spain, suggests: "We should . . . turn our attention to matters nearer home." To do otherwise they urge, *"is inevitably to throw one's weight on one side or the other of a conflict about world revolutionary policies which liberals and progressives, at least in America, have hitherto deliberately avoided . . ."* But to speak of "the need for unity in supporting immediately desirable measures in this country" without at the same time waging uncompromising war against Trotsky and Trotskyism is to talk nonsense. Certainly, if the *New Republic* seriously desires unity here, it will have to throw its weight on the side of the proponents of unity and against those trying to block unity. It cannot be for a People's Front against fascism and war, and at the same time adopt an attitude of tolerance toward those who are determined to split the People's Front and who ally themselves with the fascists.

Comrade Earl Browder, in his recent Madison Square Garden speech, gave the following clear and sharp answer to those who think they can remain indifferent to the menace of Trotskyism:

"Trotskyism and its alliance with fascism is no mere private affair of the Soviet Union. True it strikes first and foremost against that bulwark of peace and democracy; thereby it weakens the whole world front against fascism and war. But it goes much further. Trotskyism is active and damaging in every land, not least in the United States. Many people belittle its menace, because of its small number of active adherents. But it works with the deadliness of cholera germs, and these germs are broadcast throughout our land by the tremendous capitalist press; it is the first line attack of fascism among the masses, to paralyze their resistance through doubt and confusion."

This is not a matter of "Russian politics". Trotskyism is not "Russian", even though Trotsky the individual is. It represents those renegades from Communism who, after years of struggle within the Communist Parties for an opportunist line against Leninism, have finally completely abandoned all Communist principles, who have adopted war against the Soviet Union and against the Communist International as their creed, and who have now allied themselves with the reactionary forces everywhere, including the fascists, to further their aims.

This means more, however, than unprincipled war against the Soviet Union and Communism. It inevitably becomes war against everything progressive in every country, and in the first place against the People's Front. A People's Front is anti-fascist and anti-war; it arouses the hitherto passive sections of the population to struggle; it results in broadening the influence and strength of the Communist Parties, of the trade unions, of all militant organizations of the people; through the struggle for democracy and peace, it brings the people onto the road of revolutionary struggle for socialism; it brings to the millions an understanding of the Soviet Union's stand for peace and against fascism, interesting them in the victories of socialist con-

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struction and transforming them into conscious, active defenders of the Soviet Union. The Trotskyists see in every new sign of unity, in every new People's Front formed, new strength for the Soviet Union, new strength for the Communists, new strength for the forces against which they are waging war. They see stronger forces rallied against fascism with which they are allied. They see new strength concentrated against the war-mongers upon whom they rely for the military defeat of the Soviet Union. Is it any wonder then that the Trotskyists storm violently against the People's Front?

This opposition to the growing united front of the workers and progressives characterizes the Trotskyists in every country. They war against unity in the unions, among the unemployed, among the students, everywhere. They plan only to split and disrupt. That these splitting, wrecking activities are carried on behind a barrage of criticism from the "Left" does not alter or modify their role. It is their use of "revolutionary" phrasemongering, bringing with it confusion and sometimes demoralization among new groups of workers, that gives them a value to their fascist allies. Trotskyism, as Comrade Browder has stated above, is the first line attack of fascism among the masses.

How then can one speak of the fight against Trotskyism as "Russian politics"? That is akin to the belief that fascism is "German" or "Italian". It is the fascist spearhead on an international scale aimed at the heart of the Soviet Union and the toilers.

How then can some of our liberals speak of "turning our attention to matters nearer home", when we have these Trotskyist rats here, placing obstacles in the way of unity, undermining confidence in the Soviet Union, playing the game in the workers' ranks of the Hearsts and the Liberty Leaguers? To do so is to ignore a factor that today is seriously holding back the much needed united front of the people against our reactionaries and against war.

What are the background and the activities of the American followers of Trotsky?

The Communist Party of the United States cleansed itself of Trotskyists as soon as they showed their face in our Party, toward the end of 1928 (October), shortly after the Sixth Congress of the Communist International. Trotsky and Trotskyism had already been outlawed as representing an ideology alien to Leninism at the Seventh Plenary Session of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (1926) after Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek and other Trotskyist spokesmen had been given unlimited opportunities to argue their position. The Executive Committee had unanimously endorsed the sound Leninist line of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the building of socialism in the Soviet Union as a requisite for the carrying forward of the revolutionary international objectives of the proletarian movement. It was two years after these decisions, two years after our Party had unanimously endorsed the stand

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of the Comintern, in 1928, that Trotskyism first showed its face in our Party, and then as an outgrowth of unprincipled factionalism, Trotsky's adherents here were immediately expelled. Trotsky's splitting, disruptive line of struggle against the Soviet Union and the Communist International was peculiarly suited to Cannon, Schachtman, Abern, V. R. Dunne and others who had established themselves before the Party as unprincipled factionalists.

During the first years, until their alliance with the followers of A. J. Muste in the "American Workers Party", and mainly until their admittance into the Socialist Party last year, their influence was almost nil, except for Minneapolis, and their possibilities for harm to the labor movement strictly limited. Now this is no longer true. With Trotsky carrying on his poisonous propaganda freely from Mexico and giving guidance to his followers here, now firmly entrenched in the Socialist Party, much harm is being done to the Socialist Party itself and through it to the whole labor movement. Trotskyism has become a serious menace against which the whole labor movement, and in the first place, the Socialists must be alarmed.

The Trotskyists are functioning as a nationally organized group in the S.P., and because they are organized they are gaining one position after another to the detriment of the party. Already they, or people corrupted by them, have gained control of three Socialist papers, of several state organizations of the party, and even some the S.P. national functionaries are following a policy very close to that of the Trotskyists and apparently even in close cooperation with them. Though most of the Socialist Party members are not Trotskyists and even opposed to Trotskyism, they are without inner organization for the defense of the party and without courageous leaders who will boldly take up the fight for socialism and against counter-revolution. The result has been disastrous for the party. The party has been thrown into a deep crisis that will be fatal unless the poisonous cancer of Trotskyism is cut out clearly at the coming Socialist convention.

And what has happened to the Socialist Party is exactly what the Trotsky leaders planned to bring about while maneuvering for their admittance. In the inner faction bulletin of the Trotskyists, circulated among themselves while merger negotiations were going on, Cannon boldly wrote that they were entering the S.P. in order to form an organized fraction therein, to strengthen their forces for the Fourth (Trotskyist) International at the expense of the Socialist Party and to break off those they could control. In an open meeting in New York, Cannon stated that the same sort of policy "as had been successful in the American Workers Party" would be followed in the S.P. There the Muste group was swallowed up by the Trotskyists and those whom they couldn't swallow they expelled. In advocating affiliation to the S.P. rather than continuing as a separate group Cannon and Schachtman argued: "the Stalinists are the granite rock which cannot be penetrated or broken, but the Socialists are in such a state of confusion

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they can be readily entered and dominated". They made it clear that they were entering to broaden their base for struggle against the Soviet Union, and immediately against the growing sentiment within the S.P. for a united front with the Communists, developing as a first step toward an American People's Front. To capture the Socialist Party for Trotskyism, to destroy Socialism, to place it on the road of counter-revolution were their motives.

How well they are succeeding is shown by the position of the party after one year's cohabitation. Already one sees Norman Thomas and other leaders defending Trotskyism, excusing the assassins of Kirov, defending the confused allies of fascism, joining with Trotsky in attacking the Soviet Union. The narrow, sectarian policy foisted on the party during the election campaign, undoubtedly reflecting Trotskyist influence, resulted in discrediting the party among broad masses of workers. It put the party in a position of rendering indirect help to the most reactionary forces in the country—the Hearsts and the Liberty Leaguers—who in dozens of ways were not slow to show their appreciation. And these very things repelled the trade unionists, doing harm to socialism which will take a long time and much effort to repair. Today every honest Socialist can see the damage done to his party and to his own influence among the workers. The catastrophic drop in the Socialist vote and the heavy loss in membership—from 17,437 to 6,820 in exactly one year of Trotskyism—at a time when the Communist Party and the general labor movement were rapidly gaining in strength, tell the story. That should convince the Socialist workers of the soundness of our advice when in the most comradely way we warned them against the Trotskyists. It should convince them, as their French comrades were convinced, that Trotskyism has nothing in common with Socialism and has no place in the Socialist ranks. It should serve also as an object lesson to other labor groups and progressives, proving the wrecking, anti-labor role of Trotskyism and the necessity of cutting it out of the labor and progressive movement, root and branch. It shows the folly of opposition to the united front, attacks on the People's Front of France and Spain, of a sectarian trade union policy, and of attacks on the Soviet Union.

The destruction brought about by the Trotskyists in the Socialist Party they are attempting to duplicate in every field in accord with their general policy of opposition to the united front. Unfortunately, these activities are being carried on under the cover of their Socialist Party membership and to the detriment of the party's prestige.

In the Workers' Alliance, the unified movement of unemployed and W.P.A. workers, the Trotskyists are up to their tricks, sowing discord and confusion, attacking the organization and its leadership as insufficiently "revolutionary", organizing a Trotskyist fraction in preparation for wrecking and splitting at the chosen moment. Leaflets putting forth their poisonous slanders and insinuations are being distributed among Workers' Alliance members, and even among the recent demonstrators to Washington who

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were engaged in militant struggle against the relief and W.P.A. cuts.

In the American League Against War and Fascism we find them also, and doing the work. They declare their opposition to the League's ten-point program; they oppose the whole idea of a broad, united people's peace movement; they attack the Soviet Union; they demand recognition as an organized minority free to fight the League and its program, free to draw away its following. This also is justified as "more revolutionary"—but shorn of its phrase-mongering decorations it is wrecking work in the interest of the fascists and the warmakers.

In the American Student Union and the American Youth Congress their role is the same. They ridicule and attack the broad mass character of these movements; they attack their programs, demanding a "revolutionary" program; they attack the leadership (including their Socialist comrades in the leadership); they are clearly preparing here also for splitting activities.

In the trade union movement, at the most critical moments of struggle, their role is that of strikebreakers and stoolpigeons. The clearest example of their treachery was the unprincipled and slanderous attack on Harry Bridges, the beloved and tested leader of the West Coast maritime workers, charging him with being an agent of Ryan, in an effort to split the maritime federation in the heat of its most bitter struggle against the shipowners. They were unsuccessful only because the workers knew and trusted Harry Bridges and could see daily the soundness of his leadership. The strike victory there is the best answer to their splitting moves. In Akron, Minneapolis and many other places, their role has been the same.

In Minnesota, where the Farmer-Labor Party is in power, with Governor Elmer A. Benson loyally adhering to the agreed-upon party program and going out of his way to aid and directly support the efforts of the workers to organize and improve their conditions, the Trotskyists (led by V. R. Dunne) are fighting Benson, fighting the Farmer-Labor Party and allying themselves with everything vile, crooked and reactionary in Minnesota politics. In the Trades and Labor Assembly elections, they put up a joint ticket of Trotskyists and the most notorious and discredited reactionaries. In their fight on Benson and his program they have gone with their reactionary trade union allies into a broader alliance with the Minnesota Liquor Dealers Association and big trucking corporations, to defeat legislative measures endorsed by a delegates' party convention unanimously. Yet they attack the Farmer-Labor Party as insufficiently radical; they attack the People's Front. And to defeat it they join a broader front with the open enemies of the Farmer-Labor Party. They openly declare their aim to split the Farmer-Labor Party and to destroy the Communist Party. And the Socialists should remember that all this is done in their name, under the banner of "Socialism".

In the campaign for aid to Spain, when workers everywhere were stirred by the heroic resistance of the Spanish

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people to the armed assault of the fascists; when they came to meetings in thousands, giving money, food, clothing; when hundreds were volunteering to go to Spain ready to give their lives to aid in the fight for democracy, the Trotskyists came to these meetings with leaflets, with questions and interjections designed to demoralize and disorganize defenders of Spain. Leaflets were distributed saying, "Down with Franco, down with the People's Front!" The People's Front, while organizing and leading the Spanish people against fascism, was pictured as stabbing the Spanish people in the back. Is it any wonder that in Spain they were branded as agents of the fascists in the people's ranks and then suppressed by the Military Junto? How long will we, workers and progressives, tolerate such scabbery and trickery here?

It is this long string of crimes against the working class and progressive movements here, in Spain, in France, in Germany, in China, in the Soviet Union, which proves that here is not "Russian politics", but an international menace. Basing themselves at the outset on a determination to block the aggressive building of socialism in the Soviet Union, to overthrow the Soviet government, to defeat the loyal Leninist leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union headed by Comrade Stalin, Lenin's best disciple, they have today become the servants of fascist reaction. In the Soviet Union they assassinate loyal and tried socialist builders; they wreck trains, destroy machinery, delay production; they ally themselves with Japanese and German fascists. In Spain they try to split the People's Front and undermine the government in the midst of bitterest revolutionary battles. In Germany and Austria they work with the secret police, the Gestapo, betraying the heroic underground anti-fascists, both Socialists and Communists. Here, look where you will, wherever you find them, there they are splitting, wrecking, destroying, hampering the growth of the workers' movement, striving to prevent its necessary unification.

Such people have no place where honest, progressive workers gather. They must be treated as workers have always treated betrayers, stool pigeons, spies. The workers must be informed as to their role and aroused to drive them out.

At the same time it is necessary to break down any semblance of support for them or tolerance toward them among progressives and liberals who may be influenced by false appeals such as the right of asylum for Trotsky, a "free and impartial trial", etc. Every effort must be made to draw such people away from Trotskyist influence and into the anti-fascist, anti-Trotskyist camp.

In this connection it is necessary to note the pro-Trotskyist policy of the Lovestoneites. They declare in one breath that they are not Trotskyists, but in the next proceed to condemn the Soviet trials in the best Trotskyist manner, finding justification or excuses for the wrecking activities of these traitors, etc. Moreover, on Spain, the Lovestoneites are rendering full support to the Trotskyist P.O.U.M., justifying its betrayals and aid to the fascists, claiming of course that the

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P.O.U.M. is "more Marxist", "more revolutionary", "more Leninist", etc. But on the policy of the People's Front the Lovestoneites, like the Trotskyists, are fighting against this course, refusing to see that through the anti-fascist struggle for democracy and peace, the people will be won for and drawn into the struggle for socialism. In fighting against Trotskyism, the Lovestoneites and all others who defend or excuse Trotskyism must be smoked out and their policies and proposals defeated.

The Trotskyists must be driven out! There is no room for scabs, splitters and assassins in the labor movement! The People's Front—the Farmer-Labor Party—uniting all workers and honest progressives, must be pushed forward with ever greater vigor as the weapon of the masses against reaction and its Trotskyist agents.

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THE STRUGGLE AGAINST CRIMINAL SYNDICALIST LAWS

BY ANNA DAMON

THE recent victory for free speech forced from the United States Supreme Court in the case of Dirk De Jonge, must be regarded first of all from the point of view of the line of political action which it indicates and underlines. From the purely legal point of view it would be a mistake to regard this as in any sense a final triumph. The decision was actually narrow, legally, and applied only to a specific and unusual set of circumstances. The victory, on the other hand, has the broadest political implications, and already has had considerable repercussions.

The De Jonge victory points first of all, of course, to the importance of the work of the International Labor Defense in conducting campaigns around specific, dramatic, cases of persecution for labor and political activity. This was a Communist case, but it arose out of the reactionaries' attempt to break the 1934 Pacific Coast maritime strike, and involved especially the rallying of the unemployed to support of that strike. Briefly, the story of the case is this:

Dirk De Jonge was a leader of the unemployed movement in Portland, Oregon. In the middle of the 1934 strike, the reactionary forces were counting on dividing the unemployed from the strikers, using them as strike-breakers. De Jonge organized a solidarity demonstration of the unemployed, which made the carrying out of these plans impossible. At the time, also, the police in their efforts to break the strike made raid after raid on workers' halls and homes in Portland. The Communist Party called a meeting to protest these illegal activities of the police, as well as their brutal slugging and shooting of striking longshoremen. The meeting was held on July 27, 1934. It, too, was raided by police. Edward Denny, the chairman, Dirk De Jonge, one of the speakers, and four other persons were arrested, and were charged with violation of the state criminal syndicalism law enacted in 1919 and amended in 1933. De Jonge, because of his important role in successfully organizing the unemployed against strikebreaking, was singled out for special persecution. He was convicted and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Denny was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Another defendant was given a sentence of five years, which was later suspended. The other cases have never come to trial.

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De Jonge's conviction was appealed to the Oregon State Supreme Court which upheld it. In this decision the court held that although there was no charge that De Jonge advocated *"crime, physical violence, sabotage, or any unlawful acts or methods as a means of accomplishing or effecting industrial or political change or revolution"* (the language of the statute), he was nevertheless guilty because, the court held, the Communist Party, under whose auspices the meeting was held, did advocate those things. The evidence brought forward by the state to prove this ridiculous charge against the Communist Party was in the nature of witnesses who testified that the Communist Party sent open postcards (not produced in court) to its committees instructing them to rob banks!

The decision of the United States Supreme Court, delivered on January 4, 1937, cannot in any sense be regarded as a legal reversal of the reactionary principles of criminal syndicalist laws. The decision was based on one point, and the Court specifically stated that it was not deciding any other issues. Previous decisions of the Court (on the New York criminal anarchy law, the California Criminal Syndicalist laws) had declared this type of law constitutional. The following quotations from the decision make this point clear, and it is from these sections of the decision that the political implications of the De Jonge victory grow:

"If the Communist Party had called a public meeting in Portland to discuss the tariff, or the foreign policy of the government, or taxation, or relief, or candidates for the offices of President, Members of Congress, Governor, or state legislators, every speaker who assisted in the conduct of the meeting would be equally guilty with the defendant in this case, upon the charge as here defined and sustained (by the Oregon State Supreme Court). The list of illustrations might be indefinitely extended to every variety of meetings under the auspices of the Communist Party although held for the discussion of political issues or to adopt protests and pass resolutions of an entirely innocent or proper character.

"While the states are entitled to protect themselves from the abuse of the privileges of our institutions through an attempted substitution of force and violence in the place of peaceful political action in order to effect revolutionary changes in government, none of our decisions go to the length of sustaining such a curtailment of the right of free speech and assembly as the Oregon statute demands in its present application. . . ."

Here is the re-affirmation by the Supreme Court of its position in favor of repressive legislation. In this decision, hailed as liberal, the court once more takes the same position that it took in the Gitlow, Whitney, and other cases, where long before the present anti-labor decisions the court established its reputation as the bulwark of reaction.

"We are not called upon to review the findings of the state court as to the objectives of the Communist Party. Notwithstanding those objectives, the defendant still enjoyed his personal right of free speech and to take part in a peaceful assembly having a lawful purpose, *although called by that party.* The defendant was *none the less* entitled to discuss the public issues of the day and thus in a lawful manner, without incitement to violence or crime, to seek redress of alleged personal grievances. That was of the essence of his guaranteed personal liberty." (Italics mine—A.D.)

The ruling of the Supreme Court in the De Jonge case is in fact an endorsement of criminal syndicalist laws.

It is clear that the Supreme Court carefully circumscribed its concession to the fundamental principles of liberty, in this decision, to say in effect

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that the State of Oregon had merely gone too fast, too far, without taking the necessary precautions to bring its actions within the rules of the game as prescribed by the court.

The decision instructs the states that any nullification or abridgement of the great principles, which the court pronounces so pontifically, will have the court's approval, if only the states take the trouble to apply repressive laws "correctly".

Now, having defined the limits of the legal implications of the *decision*, let us examine the effects and implications of the *victory* which was won by the International Labor Defense in obtaining a reversal of the De Jonge conviction.

First of all, of course, the freeing of Dirk De Jonge and of Edward Denny from prison terms, the lifting of the threat of prosecutions against four other persons in Oregon indicted on similar charges, are no small victory in themselves. But repercussions of the decision have been much broader than this. Even before the text of the United States Supreme Court decision had been received in Oregon, the tremendous popularity of the De Jonge victory for labor's rights had resulted in an open movement in the Oregon legislature, which is gradually gaining strength, for the repeal of the state criminal syndicalist statute. The support of the majority of the press of the state (in which Hearst had not a single newspaper) is behind this move. The International Labor Defense and the American League Against War and Fascism are organizing a campaign for the demand for such repeal, which should receive the full support of our Party.

A significant indirect result of the De Jonge victory is the decision of Vice-Chancellor Fielder in New Jersey, in a suit by the Communist Party of Hudson County, to enjoin officials from arbitrary interference with meetings called by the Communist Party. His decision granting such an injunction, coming down within two weeks after the De Jonge decision, was probably influenced by that victory.

Directly and indirectly, the trade union and progressive movement and campaign in California for the repeal of the criminal syndicalist law there have been deeply spurred by the De Jonge victory and by the impetus given for repeal in Oregon. With organized activity and political alertness, the same sort of movement can be developed in the State of Washington, where a repeal act has already been introduced in the legislature.* It is on the Pacific Coast that the criminal syndicalist laws have been applied most viciously. In Illinois the De Jonge victory has been used as a lever in a legislative campaign initiated by the International Labor Defense for the repeal of that state's criminal syndicalist law. Similar possibilities exist in several of the thirty-six states which have criminal syndicalist or the related "criminal anarchy", "sedition", and "insurrection" laws upon their statute books.

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* Since the writing of this article, repeal of the Washington criminal syndicalist law was voted on February 18, by 58 to 37 votes in the House of Representatives. Other developments in this struggle are the introduction in the Pennsylvania legislature of a bill to repeal the Flynn Sedition Law; passage of the criminal syndicalist law repealer by the Senate in Oregon; introduction of a repealer bill in Indiana; loss of a repealer for Idaho's criminal syndicalist law by four votes in the legislature of that state; defeat of a teachers' and school gag against teaching Communism in Arkansas.

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At the Ninth Convention of our Party last July, a portion of the report of Comrade Browder was passed in the form of a resolution presented as a central point for the election campaign which followed.

"The Communist Party must use the opportunity of this election campaign to smash once and for all the superstition, which has been embodied in a maze of court decisions having the force of law, that our Party is an advocate of force and violence, that it is subject to laws (federal immigration laws, state 'criminal syndicalism' laws) directed against such advocacy. The Communist Party is not a conspirative organization; it is an open revolutionary party, continuing the traditions of 1776 and 1861; it is the only organization that is really entitled by its program and work to designate itself as 'sons and daughters of the American revolution'. Communists are not anarchists, not terrorists. The Communist Party is a legal party and defends its legality. Prohibition of advocacy of force and violence does not apply to the Communist Party; it is properly applied only to the Black Legion, the Ku Klux Klan, and other fascist groupings, and to the strikebreaking agencies and the open-shop employers who use them against the working class, who are responsible for the terrible toll of violence which shames our country."

Let us examine briefly the highlights in the history of repressive legislation.

The first political repressive measures passed in the United States were the federal "Alien and Sedition" laws of 1798 by the reactionary Federalist administration. Its opponents were arrested, jailed, and had enormous fines levied against them under these laws, for exercising the right of free speech in criticism of the administration. President Jefferson, elected on the tide of a wave of resentment against the reaction of the Federalists, immediately freed all the victims. The laws were repealed in 1801, sentences wiped out and fines remitted.

For a long period thereafter, no direct political repressive measures against labor were passed by the federal legislature. The industrial states made no attempt in this direction but relied on the old "conspiracy laws" to suppress labor organization. When these failed, the frame-up system was developed to "handle" labor matters. In the Southern states, however, so-called insurrection laws, inspired by constant fear of slave uprisings, were passed. The Georgia law, under which Angelo Herndon was convicted, is an example. It was originally passed in 1804, and amended in 1861, and 1866.

As the power of labor grew, and forced recognition of the right to organize, the rulers of America cast about for new methods of repression. The assassination of President McKinley in 1901, and the hysteria which followed it furnished one excuse for repression in the New York State criminal anarchy law. Subsequently, in 1910, and during the war and post-war years, this law, upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States as constitutional, was made the model for all present laws of this type. In the period of post-war hysteria which swept the country as a repercussion of the revolutionary wave in Europe (1919-1921) the fear of the American ruling class sought refuge behind a wall of legislation. State after state set up what they hoped would be a barrier to revolutionary ideas—criminal syndicalist laws. The provisions of these laws were so vague, so all-inclusive, as to make them perfect weapons against the entire labor movement. In 1917, a federal sedition law was passed as an emergency war measure. It was

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repealed, except for one section, in 1925. The one remaining section was used for the first and only time so far to prosecute unemployed workers who demonstrated for relief in Oklahoma City in 1933. A federal sedition bill, similar to the state criminal syndicalist laws introduced in Congress by Senator Russell and Congressman Kramer in 1936, failed of passage.

If we were to examine our activities in the elections we would find that although this opportunity was used to a greater extent than ever previously, it was not made use of to the fullest extent either in the elections, or since. For example, the De Jonge case was certainly not used in this manner in the election campaign, although the events since have shown what a powerful weapon this could have been. By contrast, the issues in the Sacramento criminal syndicalism case, and the issue of the repeal of the California criminal syndicalist law, were brought forward quite prominently in that state. Undoubtedly the campaign helped considerably in overcoming the Red scare agitation of Hearst and paved the way for the splendid results in recruiting members into the Party in that state.

The struggle against criminal syndicalist laws is one of the most dramatic forms of the whole fight for freedom of speech, press and assembly, and for the legality of our Party, which we have so far developed. Even though it is only one phase of the fight, it is an extremely important one. All around us are countless opportunities to take the offensive in this struggle, to put up real political battles in defense of our Party on the basis of its legality. It is the key, in many cases, to the broadest issues of the right of labor to organize and struggle for its economic as well as its political demands. An example of this last is the Hudson County, New Jersey, injunction secured by our Party. This served not only to break open the stronghold of Boss Hague for the Communist Party, but paved the way for the whole trade union movement which is making a campaign to establish its rights in New Jersey.

Yet we see day after day go by, with many important issues directly tied up with the question of the legality of our Party dismissed as "just defense cases", and turned over to the International Labor Defense. This is particularly true of deportation cases, which are frequently looked upon as a matter for the lawyers to worry about, and not as forums and vehicles through which we can bring forward the aims and the Americanism of our Party with telling effect, especially in the trade unions.

Comrade Browder's report to the December, 1936, plenum of the Central Committee said:

> "We should mention the problem of the International Labor Defense and its growing importance. The whole question of labor defense and the struggle for labor's prisoners, internationally and nationally, is becoming more and more important. *As the masses get a keener understanding of the problem of the connection of democratic rights, they are taking up the problems of political prisoners with a keenness and on a wider scale than we have ever seen in this country.* Enormous things can be accomplished in the field of labor defense nationally and internationally if we give a little more attention to it."

This whole broad field of defense of political prisoners includes primarily the defense of workers arrested in economic struggle. A tremendous growth in the trade union labor defense move-

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ment is imminent and already evident in California. But in California the greatest unifying factor in this movement is precisely the struggle against the criminal syndicalist law. The New Jersey instance, already cited, shows that the keenness of the working class is being sharpened also in its growing realization of the importance of political struggle on all fields.

It is especially necessary, since the struggle for democratic rights at this time is a struggle against reaction and fascism, for the I.L.D. to take up a sharp offensive against these laws, and the application of laws and court decisions based on them. Such a drive is inextricably woven with the offensive against the Ku Klux Klan, Black Legion, vigilante, and other vehicles of violence against the working class, national and political minorities. Broad support can be won from organized labor for this struggle.

The Angelo Herndon case, now before the United States Supreme Court where it was argued February 8, 1937, and the Sacramento case, are examples of such issues which it is necessary and possible to make into nation-wide issues. As this article is written, we learn that the State of Georgia is taking steps to strengthen its anti-labor legislation by adding to the "insurrection" law, under which Herndon was convicted, a "sedition" statute even more drastic than those in force in other states. Whether the Supreme Court rules in Herndon's favor or against him, whether it orders him to the chain-gang or sets him free, the great movement developed around this case will have to be directed also against this new repressive law.

A successful campaign against such legislation is the case of Jack Barton, convicted in Bessemer, Alabama, on a charge of possession of Communist literature (under a local ordinance). Through the fight which the I.L.D. developed around this case, in which the ordinance was declared unconstitutional by the state Court of Appeals, the Party has broken through into partial legality in Birmingham. As another direct result of the fight on the Barton case, an offensive movement against violation of labor's rights was opened up in the heart of the U. S. Steel territory by the trade unions of the state.

In the hearings before the La Follette Civil Rights Committee in Washington, on the Barton and Gelders cases, the Party's fight against all attempts to illegalize it, as well as its position on the question of violence, were given nation-wide prominence.

In developing positive forms of action, arising very often out of defense cases, the I.L.D. has shown how effective these can be. Because of his activity in the defense of Barton, Joseph Gelders, Southern secretary of the National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners, was kidnapped and flogged by steel company thugs last September. A relentless campaign for prosecution of the kidnappers, making use of every contradiction in the Alabama political set-up, although it has not yet resulted in actual indictment of the thugs, has had some positive results. It was this campaign which brought the trade unionists of Alabama to a realization of their own stake in this struggle and of the pos-

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sibilities for action. A body of liberal and progressive opinion which few ever realized existed in Alabama has been developed and is in process of organizational crystallization in the heart of the deep South. Through this campaign a good airing of the issues was secured in the Alabama press, and an exposure of a good part of the reactionary set-up made possible both locally and, in the La Follette hearings, nationally.

In Tampa, Florida, the prosecution of Lawrence Ponder, vigilante, one of those who broke up the Browder election meeting there October 25, 1936, is another example of the positive use of the courts to fight against all attempts at illegalizing our Party. Prompt action by Comrade Browder and by the local people made possible a campaign in which this issue can be brought forward on the rostrum of the courts.

Hand in hand with the struggle against repressive legislation must go the fight against deportation and revocation of citizenship of Communists. Very frequently these cases receive too scant attention from our people, who are inclined to leave the main conduct of the defense in the hands of the defense organization and of the lawyers. By the very nature of his profession, an attorney can only develop the legalistic points. Whether the attitude is that we must help and supplement the lawyer, or vice versa, it is necessary that the political content of such defense cases (and all defense cases for that matter) be guided and controlled, even in their legalistic phases, by those responsible for political action. The case of Emil Gardos, who was deprived of citizenship obtained by naturalization, on the ground that he is a Communist, is an example. The biggest fight should —and still can—be made in this case or the basis of the legality and the Americanism of our Party. The broad support which can be developed in deportation cases is illustrated by the case of Lorenzo Puentes in Tampa, Florida, who is threatened with deportation to Cuba on the ground that he is a Comunist, and in whose defense the International Union of Cigar Workers has come forward. Correct presentation of the political issues involved in other deportation cases can produce similar support.

We have presented here only a few examples of the struggle against criminal syndicalist laws, deportations, etc., with which the defense movement is now confronted, and some of the forms used in this struggle. There are other forms which are being and can be developed—the fight for freedom of the air, for the right to the ballot, against restriction of meetings, etc. There are literally hundreds of possibilities of development of this whole campaign which need only to be recognized and taken up, to give this struggle the character of a nation-wide progressive movement, based on hundreds of local cases as well as on the relatively small number which can become national issues. Such a movement can greatly broaden and enrich the whole struggle against reaction.

The struggle against criminal syndicalist and related laws, for freedom of speech and assembly and to maintain the legality of our Party, is inseparably tied up with the legislative program formulated by our Central Committee:

"Repeal all federal legislation infringing upon political rights and free-

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dom of assemblage, press and radio. Outlaw the Black Legion, Ku Klux Klan, vigilante gangs, and other terrorist organizations. Repeal all sedition, criminal syndicalism, and teachers' oath legislation."

It is understood, of course, that the above quotation applies to state and local as well as federal laws.

The International Labor Defense has already initiated a campaign for the repeal of repressive legislation in several states—Oregon, California, Washington, Illinois. The De Jonge decision paves the way for extending this campaign on a nation-wide scale. To do this effectively, it is essential that these campaigns receive the fullest support of our entire Party.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE JUDICIAL OLIGARCHY

THE ULTIMATE POWER, by Morris L. Ernst, Doubleday, Doran & Co. $3.00.
THE NINE OLD MEN, by Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, Doubleday, Doran & Co. $2.50.

One of the focal points in the struggle between the forces of progress and reaction now going on in the United States is the judicial dictatorship of the Supreme Court. From the very beginning of the United States as a republic, the ruling class has used the judiciary to buttress the dominance of property rights over human rights. For this reason the judicial oligarchy was attacked by those who championed democracy and wider liberties for the common man. Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln in their day defeated the attempts of the courts to set themselves up as the supreme arbiters of the political and economic life of the people.

Today the most reactionary sections of capitalism are using the courts with the objective of smashing the fight for greater democratic rights and for paving the way to fascism. Ever since the Civil War, the Supreme Court has been used by the ruling class to pile up a series of decisions which robbed the American people of elementary rights and which have extended the domination of Wall Street. The nine old men are the shock troops of the reactionary and fascist-minded forces, who want to destroy every vestige of democracy. Through setting up the Supreme Court as the ultimate power, they hope to nullify the people's mandate for progress registered at the polls last November.

The importance of the issue can be guaged from the ferocious offensive launched by the reactionaries against the mild and unsatisfactory proposals of Roosevelt to "purge" the courts. It shows that the reactionaries realize that any step in the direction of curbing the powers of the court is a blow in favor of progress; hence, the mobilization of every medium capable of influencing public opinion to defeat the enlargement of the courts.

At this time, with a wave of reactionary ballyhoo flooding the country with false stories bout the sanctity of the court, portraying the judges as a check against "dictatorship", and other such Liberty League-inspired arguments, it is necessary that the American people be shown very clearly the role of the court as a tool of the big corporations, and the personnel of the bench as paid servants of the ruling class.

One of the by-products of the fight over the Supreme Court has been a whole series of new books on the subject. There have been appeals to popular opinion, seeking to paint the court as nine arch-angels, interpreting the Constitution as a set of immutable principles laid down from above. On the other side, there has been a batch of books which have tried to debunk the court and show the nine old men for what they are. The two books under review are the latest which have come off the press. They have the virtue of being popularly written, and of containing a great deal of timely material.

Messrs. Pearson and Allen—the political Walter Winchells of Washington—have written a gossipy book whose value lies in the fact that it portrays the men on the Supreme Court as petty, hide-bound reactionaries, who served railroads and corporations before their appointments, and who have served them even better after their appointments. Some of the facts which they reveal can very well be used to explode the dogma most favored by the

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reactionaries—that the Supreme Court judges are super-men above prejudice and class bias. They are shown as the worst types of reactionaries—hating every form of progress. Indeed, it is the unrelieved reaction of the so-called conservative wing which makes it seem that the liberal members of the court are "progressive".

However, Messrs. Pearson and Allen never get beyond personal debunking. Mr. Ernst's attempt is far more ambitious. He tries to show the development of the court into an instrument of reaction which nullifies the efforts of the masses to better their social and economic conditions. There is little new in his argument and it does not have the impressive factual material collected by Boudin in his *Government by Judiciary*, which Mr. Ernst for some reason or other fails even to mention. The book again demonstrates what is known to every one who has read American history that the judiciary has usurped the rights belonging to Congress and the other elected representatives of the people, and set itself up as a dictatorial oligarchy serving the interests of Wall Street.

In view of the hot fight now raging around President Roosevelt's proposals, the heart of the book is Mr. Ernst's solution for the problem. And he has no effective solution whatsoever. He borrows James Madison's point that Congress should have the right to overrule the Supreme Court's decisions by a two-thirds vote. In the first place, a much simpler and more effective solution would be for Congress to reassert its power to pass labor and social legislation, and to deny the Supreme Court any right to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional. This is already in the Constitution and needs only a majority vote of Congress to reaffirm its powers. In the second place, if necessary, an amendment to the Constitution can be passed ending forever the ability of the judicial oligarchy to thwart the democratic rights of the American people.

It is in the light of these fundamental solutions that the Communist Party urges the support of Roosevelt's proposals. In the immediate situation the defeat of the reactionaries on this point would be a step towards realizing the broader objective of abolishing the tyranny of the judiciary. Those liberals who criticize the proposals from a so-called "Left" point of view are playing the game of the reactionaries. A victory for the reactionaries would place greater obstacles in the road of the people who are seeking to reassert their rights to enact legislation through representatives of their own choosing.

Suggestions like those contained by Mr. Ernst in his book—although he may have changed them since Roosevelt made his pronouncement—are neither fundamental solutions, nor aids towards the passage of the proposal to enlarge the court, which is the question of the day. The fundamental solution must be the complete abolition of the power of the judiciary to destroy progressive measures, and this in turn must be tied up with the immediate fight to defeat the reactionaries on the issue of enlarging the court. This is the road to take if the American people are to deprive the Supreme Court judges of their ultimate power and retire the old fogies on the bench back to the corporations who will pay them well for services received.

JOHN KURTZ

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